

# IRELAND TO-DAY

SOCIAL      ●      ECONOMIC      ●      NATIONAL      ●      CULTURAL

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ONE SHILLING

## NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

S. J. MURRAY has had a long connection with industrial organisation and all that relates thereto. He had made a close study of industrial training both at home and abroad.

AN PHILIBIN. Dr. John Pollock is already well-known to our readers as the author of many polished lyrics.

ERIC GILL, sculptor, book-decorator, typographer; received into Catholic Church, 1913; led by social and economic conditions of industrially organised society to writing on the subject; author of *Work and Leisure*; recently elected a Royal Academician.

B. B. WATERS has made special study of national economics and of monetary theory in relation to the social and economic reconstruction enjoined in the *Papal Encyclicals*.

DENIS DEVLIN. The poem we print here is taken from a volume, *Intercessions*, to be published shortly.

R. HUMPHREYS, B.L., took part in Howth gun-running, fought in G.P.O., 1916; successful in many international motor cycle events, including *Paris-Nice trial*, the *T.T.*, etc.; drives Irish-built car of his own design.

TERENCE O'REILLY is the pen-name of ANTHONY WEST. Born, 1910, in County Down, in the shadow of landlordism, son of a Protestant menial. Family came to softer Cavan in 1921, still under said shadow. Emigrated to U.S.A. in 1930 and lived on his wits and black coffee for five years. Has promise of American publication if he rewrites a novel.

FLANNÁN O'FLAHERTY, a young Roscommon man; now a journalist in Dublin; not yet 25, he has sailed round the world before the mast.

GARRETT O'DRISCOLL, *Tailteann Prize Novelist*. Contributor to *Catholic World*, *Columbia*, etc. (U.S.A.); author of *Short Stories and Articles in English and Irish magazines and newspapers*; member *Irish Women Writers' Club*.

The regular features are conducted by the Editors of the several sections:

<i>Foreign Commentary</i>	..	MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING.
<i>Art</i> .. ..	..	JOHN DOWLING, B.A., B.D.S.
<i>Music</i> .. ..	..	EAMONN Ó GALLCHOBHAIK.
<i>Theatre</i> .. ..	..	SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA, B.A.
<i>Film</i> .. ..	..	LIAM Ó LAOGHAIRE.
<i>Books</i> .. ..	..	EDWARD SHEEHY, M.A.



## EDITORIAL

GREATER definition now marks the outlines of the election campaign in the twenty-six counties, and it is no aspersion on our present rulers but merely a practice mellowed by precedent that a spate of pre-election tricks—rebates, price reductions, new factories, and records of achievement—is pouring from the governmental hat. A carefully planned climax will become evident to close observers, who may thus gauge the nearness of the date—a date which, as we prophesied some months ago, is nearer than earlier estimates had placed it. The publication of the new Constitution must be very near, since its terms have long since become gossip for the politically-minded in Dublin drawingrooms. Unless remarkable ingenuity is displayed in its presentation to the electorate, we feel it would be a mistake for any party to anticipate much enthusiasm from a somewhat callous or disillusioned people. And even with a few likely gestures, such as the release of political prisoners to trumpet its arrival, it may take more to break down the resentment felt by many former friends of the Government at their apparent abandonment of the ideals whose profession floated them into power: to many the situation has brought virtual disfranchisement.

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All this is not without its reverberations in the North, where a clamour set up to precipitate elections there, too, met with enfeebled replies from the authorities, who seem at last to realize that they have overstayed their welcome. Nobody wishes to inflict further misgovernment and associated unemployment on Belfast or the north-east, but it is, nevertheless, probably true that things will get worse before they get better. Still, with growing signs of interest among our English contemporaries, mainly on the basis of defensive solidarity or an Ireland united for the purpose of curbing the obvious centrifugal tendencies of the twenty-six counties, it may well be that from whatever motive, the union of North and South will be facilitated before anyone is much older. The difficulties will be great; but the binding forces will be impelling and, once in being, tenacious.

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A type of the kind of factor making for a spiritual breach with our Northern fellow-countrymen is in the various discreditable and pseudo-religious movements that have been formed within

recent months. The major of these had been looked to with hope by certain political aspirants and others, but its desertion, without a word explaining or recanting, by all the more respectable elements, has ruled it out as being any longer a factor in the coming elections. That is to the good, and it is to the good, too, perhaps, that Spain will not prove an issue, yet the incident of the rise and virtual collapse of the movement is not without its warnings. The head of Fascism, backed by certain powerful elements of the Press, which have resisted to a primitive degree any betterment of the workers' lives that could in any way be regarded as an inroad on capitalism, has shown itself here much more positively than its alleged anti-body Communism. In fact, here, the anomaly, which requires some explanation surely, is that virulent anti-Communism has preceded the advent of the virus itself. Were it not for its bearing on the above, we should not even refer to the suggestion made by the Irish Minister in Berlin, that Irish youth admires Herr Hitler and the Reich. Exaggerated importance has been attached to the indiscretion, but it should be stressed that whilst Germany had very many admirers in Nationalist and Republican Ireland during the days of war when her friends were few, yet they do *not* admire the *Fuehrer* or his methods and await expectantly the reassertion of the real Germany.

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The Census taken recently in the six counties of the North of Ireland shows trends almost parallel with those in the larger area. The total population figure, it is true, shows increase as against the actual decrease returned last year for the twenty-six counties ; but the difference is not very significant. The population is now 1,279,177, as compared with 1,256,561 in 1926. Compiling the two results, the present population of the country is approximately 4,245,031. From the Western and "Border" counties in both cases there has been a flight eastward towards the cities. Rural depopulation generally has proceeded apace, all urban districts benefiting. Although the country, as a whole, tends towards an excess of males, in both Belfast and Dublin, there is a big preponderance of females, no doubt owing to the development of light industry. No figures are yet available, but the disparity between the North and the South in birth-rates, marriage-rates and death-rates will, no doubt, again reflect in the North's favour. There *are* reasons for the superiority in these respects of the six counties apart from their better balanced industrial economy : these go as



far back as the late introduction of the potato into the North and its less degree of dependence on this root in time of famine, and also the superior property system—Ulster tenant right—among other causes. Nevertheless, it shows that population increase in the twenty-six counties might legitimately be expected were such improvement effected in rates of births, deaths and marriages as would bring the figure even up to the six-county level.

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Depopulation and the migration of Gaels are brought to our notice from two recent sources. From Connemara one hundred more native-speakers of Irish have been transferred under the Government's scheme to the fat lands of the east. We wish the scheme God-speed in so far as it is undoubtedly well-intentioned, but we cannot but feel that there is an element of defeatism underlying it, a lack of courage to face another solution. We should like our forestry, or rather our afforestation experts, to examine the whole question and find if it would not be possible to retain these people in their own part of the country by an intensive afforestation scheme. To us it seems that not even the monies voted for forestry are actually fully spent and that there is an over-concentration of planting operations in the admittedly friendlier south-east, where the advantages of afforestation cannot be as relatively beneficent as in Connemara and where also industries and proximity to markets already make in these areas for a very much higher standard of living.

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The second instance is from Scotland, where the defeat of the Caledonian Bill that would have provided so much employment for the fast-disappearing Gael, has given quite a filip to the Home Rule movement, which Scottish Labour looks now like taking under its wing. So gloomy does the future of the Gael and Gaelic in Scotland appear to Norwegian scientists, that a group are undertaking a language survey this summer, to extend over three years, it being their considered opinion that the language is already doomed and that if they do not act quickly, it will even, as has happened largely to the Cornish and Manx branches, pass unrecorded. Perhaps the registered threat will spur *An Comunn Gaidhealach* on to even greater efforts. We in this country should help in whatever way we can.

From another Celtic offshoot, Wales, comes another Home Rule rumbling, the officials of the Welsh Nationalist Party having sought the co-operation of our Southern Government

in advancing towards a devolutionary form of autonomy. Our nationalist beginnings were much the same, the parliamentary movement providing the political education whilst the patriotic milestones of revolt secured the political advance. Wales has seen direct action lately by some of her most respected sons, in protest, when all pacific means had failed, against a militaristic invasion of their country.

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We have had occasion recently to take exception to the wounding of Jewish religious susceptibilities arising out of the thoughtless passing of a politically-inspired resolution in the Dublin County Council. Our attitude gains support from the whole-hearted affection of the farewell accorded the Chief Rabbi by our Cardinal. Charity and tolerance (not in any patronising sense, but rather sympathetic understanding) are badly wanted, and in this connection we must give ourselves a well-merited rap on the knuckles. In a comment last month we were less than fair to at least one Presbyterian, Rev. Dr. Irwin, whose love of country and active sympathy with Irish independence, is a matter of decades fraught with sacrifice.

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We have noted with pleasure a few spontaneous upsurgings of the love of the beautiful among individual groups, unaided by subsidy. The annual exhibition in Waterford of representative paintings by Irish artists, the proposal now taking distinct shape, to give Limerick a gallery of art, and now the active proposals to establish a provincial museum for Cork, all are signs of hope and the survival of the still small flame.

Not without significance, too, is the solid berating of the Athlone broadcasting given by the *Irish Times*, which always has had kind words to say for the existing Director. Their pungent comments reflect informed public opinion and we hope that the abuse of the things of the spirit shown by the Government in regarding broadcasting as a substantial source of revenue will cease under the pressure of such criticism.



## FOREIGN COMMENTARY

THE activities in the U.S.A. of Mr. J. L. Lewis, head of the Committee for Industrial Organisation, who has been extending his triumphs in the past month, are likely to be of far-reaching consequence both for American domestic politics and for international politics as a whole. His inroad into the labour field is, in the first place, likely to change permanently the position of labour as a political force in America, where hitherto that body has not been effectively organised for offence. It may be assumed that Lewis, whose direction of his campaign shows many of the features which distinguish the work of the complete autocrat, will not be content to use the instrument he is forging solely for economic purposes and that, even if he wished to so confine its force, he could not. American internal history over the last two decades shows, it might be argued, an amazing phobia of the probable effects of any concession to the political conscience of labour, whether called by the name of Socialism or any of its left or right synonyms. In spite of the fundamental changes which have taken place in that period in Europe, whose states alone are comparable to the U.S.A., the latter has, practically, been monopolised by its two traditional political parties. The emergence of the C.I.O. is likely to introduce a third major element and one with strong prospects of success in a very short time. The organisation which Lewis, whose method differs from theirs primarily in aiming at vertical (trade) as against horizontal (craft) organisation, is replacing, did not, as such, interfere in politics. Their abstinence may have been largely the result of the tremendous outcry which any such effort on their part was likely to raise; and the strangest point of Lewis' fight against what may be considered as organised and essential capitalism, is the fact that it has, so to speak, been taken lying down by the ordinary American citizen. This is the most important feature of recent developments from the point of view of a possible political career on the part of Lewis, and may be attributed to a recognition on the part of Americans that a programme which does not differ in essentials from much that Roosevelt has carried out with their overwhelming support cannot be as bad as it has been represented to be. In fact, Lewis' activities have recently received a powerful support from a decision of that stronghold of conservatism, the Supreme Court,

which gave judgment in favour of the validity of the Labour Relations Act which makes it obligatory on employers to treat with their workers collectively.

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Efforts for the reduction of tariffs, alluded to last month, have been carried further in the meetings in London of many of those countries primarily interested in the subject. America, in the person of Mr. Norman Davis, travelling ambassador, seems to be giving the subject some consideration, no doubt induced by Mr. Runciman's more or less official visit in the early part of the present year. Should America definitely come into the group which favours reduction or abolition, the fact would of itself, in view of the extent to which tariffs have come to be identified abroad with sound American economic policy, be likely to be a great inducement to those in doubt to follow suit. Some reports have had it that Great Britain and France, whose Minister for National Economy was one of the many foreign ministers visiting London in March, have requested the Belgian Prime Minister to make investigation into the whole problem. France has already made some departures for purposes of her internal economy from her earlier rigid high-tariff policy; England, whose exports have so far fallen behind her imports as to call for a strong note of warning on the subject in the presidential addresses of all her banking houses for the past year and more recently in a speech of her Prime Minister, would welcome any steps likely to redress the balance and to counteract elsewhere the serious losses suffered in the past few years in colonial markets from the competition of Japan. There are even some signs that Germany, whose Economics Minister visited Brussels in the past month and is soon to visit Paris, may, to some extent, modify her policy of complete isolation under which she has been working out her four-years' plan.

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The Belgian Prime Minister may feel, after his surprisingly large victory over Dégrelle, the leader of the Belgian Fascist group, that he has now got even stronger support for putting his policies into effect. Those policies are, in the foreign field, based on firm friendship with England and France. Both of the latter countries have, it may be assumed, now concurred in the Belgian desire to have independent neutrality, instead of apparent dependence on them, as enunciated by King Leopold in November last and presumably reiterated by him for the benefit of English Ministers during his visit to London at the end of March. Britain and France would, indeed, have good



reason for concurring in any Belgian proposals which would ensure to them her goodwill. Her importance is, from every point of view and not least strategically, quite out of proportion to her size; her alignment with the Colonial powers at the present juncture is all important in view of the desirability from the viewpoint of these powers of an even front to the persistent German demands for revision; and any cooling off in the attitude towards her of her two democratic western neighbours might have produced or might produce in a like case in future, a very different electoral result. That Dégrelle was beaten so decisively is certainly in large measure due to the pre-poll speech of the Cardinal of Brussels. It is probable that a large number of the "blank and spoiled votes" (a total of over 18,000 and equal to 5 per cent. of the poll) were those of persons who would, but for that speech, have voted Rexist. The speech was in many ways a surprise and was probably due to the fact that Dégrelle's admiration for his trans-Rhenane prototype could not, in view of recent happenings and in the event of ultimate victory for his party, bode any good for the Church in Belgium. The Cardinal was also actuated by the fact that the Catholic parliamentary party in Belgium, which for a very long period in the past swayed Governments there, is at present in process of reconstruction and is expected to recover its old position.

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Germany's recent behaviour in the religious sphere has roused the Holy See to its most vigorous interference in recent years in Europe. What effect it will have it is difficult to foresee. To many the conclusion of the Concordat four years ago was a surrender of immemorial claims on the part of Rome and the present attempt looks like a too late effort to stop a rot initiated then. It is certain that much of the pre-régime solidarity of the Catholic organisations has been lost in the interval and while numbers are in these matters of the least importance in the long run, it is more difficult to re-awaken enthusiasm than to start it or keep it alive. The announcement of the acceptance by Hitler of Ludendorff's ideas would seem to be a sad commentary on the effectiveness of Rome's intervention. The most serious danger, however, from the point of view of Rome is that the other Christian Churches may capitulate. While the German note to the Holy See pointed out that Catholics are only one-third of the population of Germany, hitherto they have had the backing and outspoken support of the other Confessionals against the common enemy. At the same time, it would be more easy for the other churches, without serious sacrifice of principle, to

come into line with the official view than for their temporary allies

From a different source another feature of the Nazi programme has in the last month been more effectively attacked—that of its foreign organisation which has been prohibited by law within the territory (including the Pre-war German South West Africa) administered by the South African Union. The measure taken, which prohibits the political organisation of foreign subjects, has been brewing for a long time and is but the culmination of measures with a similar end taken over the past three years, particularly in South West Africa where the German organisation was especially strong and at one time had a majority in the local Legislature.

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As suggested was likely in these columns for March, the re-orientation of Yugoslav foreign policy has resulted in a signed agreement between her and Italy. This development may be taken, from the Yugoslav point of view, as to some extent a loosening of her close relations with her Eastern and Northern allies, while from the Italian view-point, it may be taken as a slight loss of interest in Austria and Hungary. In November of last year Mussolini asserted that Hungary's "just" claims must be met and that Italian assistance would not be lacking in the process. More recently Dr. Schuschnigg has been following, for Austria, a much more independent line than is compatible with complete acquiescence in the hegemony of any other state. Hungary's just claims, on the one hand, cannot be met except at the expense of Yugoslavia's allies; Austria's unexpected independence on the other, and especially her measures against Nazi enthusiasts, render Italian pre-occupation with her affairs for the time being unnecessary and useless.

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The Spanish war continues on its problematical course. The chief event that has definitely emerged from it in the past month is Britain's refusal to undertake the convoy of her merchant ships into Spanish territorial waters in the face of Franco's threats of the treatment that the latter would receive, backed tangibly by the setting of mines. On balance the war in the last four weeks seems to have gone in favour of the Government forces, who have on the one hand assumed the offensive in Southern Spain, and have, on the other, so far, succeeded in stemming their opponents' onslaught in the north. The action round Madrid has been various, and, as far as can be judged, indecisive, with the greater part of the Franco forces on another front.

MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING



# INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

## *Continuation Education*

THE title "Vocational Education" appears in our records as a consequence of the passing of the Vocational Education Act, 1930. It is a substitution for the title "Technical Instruction." This latter title was the official one which was given by The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899.

During the years following the setting up of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, there was a wearisome repetition of lectures, addresses, statements, and statistics, the latter being judiciously extended, to almost astronomical proportions, by the use of figures relating to eggs. The whole movement degenerated into one of mere boost and propaganda. Dealing with evening classes in Technical Schools, an official of one of the principal schools stated in a press interview: "To-day the ambitious boy with natural talents and industry, no matter how poor his parents may be or how lowly placed in the social scale, has, though handicapped, the opportunities which, if well utilised, will soon place him on an even footing with his wealthier competitor in the race of life." That is just rhetoric. It has no relation whatever to truth.

The Minister of Industry and Commerce—Mr. Lemass—disposed of this statement when he made the simple statement of fact: "The production of skilled workers was a matter of technical education, and it could not be maintained that the system of technical education prevailing here was in any sense satisfactory."<sup>1</sup>

The setting up of the Commission of Technical Education in 1926 was an admission of failure; but the Commission did not throw any light on the cause of failure, or lay down a sound programme for the future.

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<sup>1</sup>Address on *Industrial Planning*, Trinity College, November, 1933.

The result of the Technical Education Commission was the passing of the Vocational Education Act, 1930. Under this Act we have : 1. Continuation education. 2. Technical education. Continuation education in the Act is thus defined : " Continuation education means education to continue and supplement education provided in elementary schools and includes general and practical training in preparation for employment in trades, manufactures, agriculture, commerce, and other industrial pursuits, and also general and practical training for improvement of young persons in the early stages of such employment."

Soon after the setting up of The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in 1899, it became the object of the Technical Instruction Department to more or less dominate both primary and secondary education. This operation was facilitated by the Consultative Committee of Education, the setting up of which formed part of the Act of 1899. In the primary schools, control was to operate through the administration of manual instruction, and in the secondary schools through the programme of science and manual instruction. The Department was frustrated in this scheme, and it never afterwards ceased to rail at the primary schools. According to its officials, primary education in Ireland was responsible for the backwardness of the country. The Assistant Secretary for Technical Instruction contributed an article to *The Manchester Guardian* European Construction Series,<sup>1</sup> in which he stated : " The greatest disability suffered by our Technical Schools is the unpreparedness of the boys coming up from the primary schools." He glosses over the fact that the same primary schools supplied a sufficiently good preparatory training for all professions and vocations in the country.

Because of this alleged deficiency, the Department established a number of what were described as Day Trades Preparatory Schools, which they certainly were not. In these schools metal-work and woodwork featured, in order to give some appearance

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<sup>1</sup>July 26th, 1923.



of a connection with trades. This activity covered over the total failure of the Department in technical training proper.

Such was the state of affairs up to the sitting of the Commission on Technical Education in 1926. The Commission was used as a means to bring about a "great push" for continuation schools, reliance being placed on such assertions as the following : "Primary School pupils at 14 are not mature enough to appreciate the realities of employment and the special forms of instruction that relate thereto ; they require to be brought through an intermediate stage where they can obtain an education with sufficient practical bias to help to correct the dislike for industrial work, which is a characteristic common to the youth of to-day leaving the primary and, indeed, the secondary schools."<sup>1</sup>

No evidence, worthy of consideration, was ever produced to justify the above assertion. When it states that there is a dislike for industrial work amongst the youth of the Saorstát, it states what is absolutely untrue. The plain fact is, that the youth had no opportunity of expressing its dislike, because no opening for industrial work existed.

How are the Vocational Education administrators giving the "practical bias" that is "to correct the dislike for industrial work?" One Vocational Education Committee published the results of its examination successes for Session 1934-5. The list extends to over three hundred items. Of these Science and Craftsmanship account for only three, the rest, namely, 99 per cent. of the whole, go to so-called commercial subjects, such as to elementary English, Irish, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, etc.<sup>2</sup>

From the assertion made in the Commission Report, there developed the definition of continuation education, as given in the Act. This definition is mere verbiage. It does not mean any of the things which are set out therein, as we will endeavour to show.

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<sup>1</sup>Report *Commission on Technical Education*, Dublin Stationery Office, 1927, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *The Drogheda Independent*, September 28, 1935.

Seeking outside the definition for the true meaning of continuation education, we find that both capitalists—the capitalists that seek to achieve economic dictatorship—and socialists, favour the form of vocational continuation education that we are now dealing with. These capitalists and socialists seek to achieve their ends by, as Eric Gill states it, the reduction of “the majority of those engaged in necessary works to a sub-human level of intellectual responsibility.”<sup>1</sup>

An American writer gives us the capitalists’ procedure: “Vocational education, and the Commercial High School, were established through the influence of Associations of Commerce, and Public Utility Companies, the argument being: ‘The increase of Socialism can be minimised by a vocational training which will increase the intelligence and further the earning power of our children.’”<sup>2</sup>

On the Socialist and Communist side this continuation education means the same as what the Marxists term ‘Poly-technisation.’ “Education means to us these things: (1) Intellectual development; (2) physical development; (3) poly-technical education, which will give knowledge relative to the general scientific principles of all production processes, and will at the same time give children and youths practice in the use of elementary tools of all branches of production.” Marx<sup>3</sup>

Marx and Engels adopted the idea from Robert Owen, and made it the corner-stone of socialist education. The system developed by Owen was to take children—the children of factory workers—when able to walk freely, or about 2 years old, to a communal playground, to be there superintended by persons instructed to take charge of them. “Each child on his entrance to be told in language which he can understand that he is never to injure his playfellows; but that, on the contrary, he is to contribute all in his power to make them happy.” All this when the child was only two years old. The child was subjected to

<sup>1</sup>Eric Gill, *Work and Leisure*, Faber and Faber, 1935, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Peter Odegard, *The American Public Mind* London, 1931, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup>Beatrice King, *Changing Man. The Soviet Education System*. Gollancz, 1936, p. 56.



this training until he reached the age of 5 years, when he entered the school, in which he remained until 10 years old, there learning the three R's and useful subjects. The playground was also to be used as a drill ground. "The person appointed to attend the children in the playground shall be qualified to drill and teach the boys the manual exercise, and that he shall be frequently so employed that afterwards, firearms, of proportionate weight and size to the age and strength of the boys, shall be provided for them, when also they might be taught to practise and understand the more complicated movements."<sup>1</sup> At ten years of age, the children entered the factory, where they worked from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The object of this system was, as Owen himself states, to produce "good servants," workers for the factories, and defenders of them if needs be—to produce a race of helots. The system was never meant for the advancement of the individual. The U.S.S.R. has the same objective, namely, to produce a proletarian mass, to work in its factories, and on the mechanised farms, and to fight.

Under the Soviets: "In the nursery-infants school polytechnisation is in its simplest form. Usually a part of a room has several carpenters' benches made to fit six-year-olds."<sup>2</sup>

The system which we have described, and which is the foundation of our continuation education, is thoroughly materialistic. It has extracted the spiritual core from education. The void thus created, has been filled with a wood and iron core. Out of this system have developed various forms of manual instruction. America tried manual instruction as a separate entity, but it failed to produce the requisite material for the building up of America's industries. This was done by the large scale importation of skilled labour. In the older countries industry was developed centuries ago along totally different lines.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Owen, *A New View of Society and other Writings*, Dent Everyman Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Beatrice King, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

Extravagant claims are made for the educational value of manual instruction. One writer states: "The educational value of manual instruction, judiciously given, is, according to some authorities, immense. It is concrete and awakens the power of concentration in children. It develops the creative faculty in them, teaches them to be makers, and gives them a keen appreciation of craftsmanship in others." All this is speculation, built upon second-hand information. It is the problems that arise from work, not from the mere work itself that is intellectual. "Work develops character, but only when it is carried on with love. It educates, but only when problems arise from it which are worked out to their solution. It widens the horizon, but only if the worker sees the connections of his work with the work of others and its consequences throughout society."<sup>1</sup>

The programme of work in continuation schools, is, according to syllabuses, made up of primary school subjects, for the larger part, the balance consisting of woodwork and metal-work. The primary school subjects are on a decidedly lower plane than the same subjects in the primary schools themselves, where there is grading, and progression, and training, while in the continuation schools there is a throw-back instead of progression.

The woodwork and metalwork comprise the whole of the "preparation for employment in trades, manufactures, and other industrial pursuits." There is no common denominator in crafts, other than skill. One of the intangible elements of skill is experience in judging the effect of a process, and in varying it to meet the factors that cannot be controlled. Each craft has its own method of approach. The wheelwright differs from the carpenter, the carpenter from the cabinet-maker, and so on. In metalwork it is the same. There is the man who works up cold ductile metal, whose strokes may not be too precise, nor too rapid. There is the blacksmith, who has to be a man of

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<sup>1</sup>Fedor Stepun, *The Russian Soul and Revolution*. Scribners, 1936, p. 29.



quick movements, quick decisions, and rapid blows, who cannot work with a micrometer. Again, there is the man who produces instruments of great accuracy, such as chronometers, who has to work with meticulous accuracy. Any attempt to impose the methods of one of these vocations upon the other would result in the spoiling of the man, and the failure of the work. There are other workers besides those in wood and metal. There are garment-makers, leather-workers, textile-workers, workers in stone. All these have been left out of consideration so that the definition of continuation education is just as we said, mere verbiage. The training given has, in reality, nothing further in view than the provision of machine fodder.

Utilitarianism cannot be made the basis of sound education, because it varies in time and in place. With the world's advancing age categories of knowledge are becoming too numerous to make it possible for educators to keep in intimate touch with them. With all this effort at imparting useful knowledge to youth, as Jerrold puts it, "One would like to think that the effect ultimately would be to correct the loose drift of the modern mind, to anchor it, at least, to a solid basis of fact. Unfortunately, the palm of wisdom is not to be won with so little dust and heat as is involved in the purchase of an omnibus of knowledge at five shillings. In the first place, to reduce history, economics, philosophy or the social sciences, to the compass required for these undertakings demands a process of abstraction which makes the result technically valueless, except to those who know what has been extracted."<sup>1</sup>

In the citation given from the Technical Commission's Report it was stated that the pupils from primary schools "require to be brought through an intermediate state where they can obtain an education with sufficient practical bias before entering industry." The following citation, which goes to prove the opposite, has been given by Dr. T. Corcoran :—<sup>2</sup>" Dr. A. A.

<sup>1</sup>Douglas Jerrold, *England*. Arrowsmith, 1935, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup>Prof. T. Corcoran, S.J., D.Litt., *Industrial Education—American or German? Studies*. June, 1919, pp. 277-278.

Hamerschlag, Director of the Carnegie Technical Schools, Pittsburg, states: 'Nothing could be more disagreeable to a child than to feel that its environment in school was not richer, better, more informative, and more stimulating, than the atmosphere of a factory. Hence there ought to be a jar; there should not be any deftly modulated transit from school into work; certain active nerve-centres in the body and the brain should resent harness, if people are ever to rise even in the scale of industrial activity. Manual training of the crude type, which tries to imitate factory processes, swiftly paralyses, and is not sufficiently educational.'

We will give another citation, from a discussion on "Art Education and the Retail Trader":<sup>1</sup> Mr. H. J. Clarke, Director of Selfridge and Co., Ltd., who presided, said: "Any specialisation must not take the place of the ordinary, good, sound, real education."

"There were drawbacks about specialised training. Educational or academic qualifications alone would not make anyone suitable for their particular kind of business. It was just the personal suitability which they had to judge. He could foresee many disappointments and a great deal of economic waste if they were going to train young people for a special job, and then the trade for which they were particularly trained found they were of no use."

"The proper course was to get people into business after making a careful selection, and if they were of the right type let them spend some of their spare time in specialised training. The right atmosphere in which to encourage specialised training was the atmosphere of the business itself."

The greatest evil of the continuation education system is that no adequate provision is made that all should receive religious instruction, according to the teachings of their church. This system of merely secular education has again and again been condemned by the church.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>North of England Education Conference, Harrogate. January, 1930.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rev. E. Cahill, S.J., *Framework of a Christian State*, Dublin, 1932, pp. 368-370.



The present provision regarding religious instruction is no part of the system of continuation education, but is just an accidental accretion. Are we going to make or try to make the criminal law the determining factor in unfair trade or business practice?

Next to the evil dealt with above, comes the anti-social trend of the system. Hitherto our education has been of a classless type. The strengthening of this would ensure a healthy State, but continuation education introduces the pernicious principle of segregation according to classes, thereby sowing the seeds of class rivalry, the basis of future class warfare.

Continuation education has accelerated the disintegration that is taking place in rural education. Instead of directing our energies to the stopping of the process, by introducing continuation education we will shatter rural education altogether.

Writing upon American education, Robert M. Lovett states: "The tradition of our grade schools, educational experts tell us, was brought by Horace Mann from Prussia. There the *Volkschule* was designed for the children of the people, who should be trained with a view to remaining in the station in which they had been born."<sup>1</sup> This is also the tradition of continuation education.

S. J. MURRAY

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<sup>1</sup>*Civilisation in the United States*, edited H. F. Stearn's Jonathan Cape, 1922, p. 84.

## CONSTANCE

There, where a mad March wind  
Blew up the blackbird's petticoat behind,  
I stood, in hopes to find  
Good counsel: but her carven eyes were blind,  
Her chiselled lips fixed in a frozen smile  
Of enigmatic guile.

A wild-duck rose, and splashed  
Into the lake again: a hail-squall lashed  
The water: hard wind dashed  
Through holly-trees, across the lawn, and thrashed  
The daffodils: when the loud tumult fell  
I whispered: Lisadell,

And, at the lonely word,  
It seemed to me a delicate tremor stirred  
The stone, as though she heard—  
Or was it but the shadow of a bird  
Cast on the senseless stone? I might not tell,  
But whispered: Lisadell,

Once more: cold drops of rain—  
Or were they living tears of homesick pain?—  
Ran down the clear-cut, plain  
And melancholy features: once again  
Sharp hail and wind smote upon lifeless stone  
There, where I stood alone.

Easter, 1937.

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## MONETARY REFORM

LIKE the child in the story, the ordinary person can see more clearly than the experts—whether interested or disinterested—the nakedness of our Emperors—

Emperors no longer enthroned on seats of wood or stone, but enthroned in the hearts and minds of every merchant and man of business :

that is to say : the hearts and minds of nearly every man and woman in the civilized world.

For our world is founded upon the ideas and ideals of men of business—*i.e.*, money makers.

There no longer remains any motive for making anything but to *sell* it.

Such is the modern world—of Europe, America, Japan . . . . .

We must see the world as it is—

the first thing to do, whatever our politics or religion.

I say our rulers are our financiers—big and small.

And I say they are naked.

They have nothing on.

For the desire of money is the root of all evil.

Evil—privation of good—nothingness, nakedness.

I say that this nakedness can be seen more clearly by those who are outside the business world—  
not entangled in the game.

That is my only justification for speaking.

My justification is precisely that I am an outsider, a responsible workman—an 'artist,' the only kind of responsible workman left and a kind who is naturally an 'outsider' in the industrial, 'business' world.

Therefore you won't hear from me any learned or expert disquisition on the financial situation.

I can only speak as an ordinary person who suffers as all ordinary

persons do from the quite obvious chaos and muddle of the existing business world

—— a world blundering into war,

war more horrible by far than any former war—more horrible exactly in proportion to the fact that it will be waged, as no wars were in the past, with the impersonal methods of joint-stock companies—

How appropriate that bombs and gases and poisons should be the weapons employed by our commercial nations—

Having first reduced the majority of workers to the sub-human, because irresponsible, condition of 'hands'—

We then very properly call in the sub-human power of chemicals to replace the sticks and stones and swords and spears which are the natural weapons of men.

But it is not my business now to condemn our civilization by drawing attention to its typical productions—

My business—our business . . . .

to draw attention to the domestic chaos and misery and crime and the international danger resulting from a financial method or system which so obviously—so obviously to all but those who profit by it or who live by manipulating it—so obviously fails to effect the distribution of the productions of our civilization—such as they are—good or bad.

We are not living in the middle ages—

we no longer drown our usurers—we honour them—for they are our rulers—they sit in the House of Lords.

We no longer live in the middle ages—

we do not produce for use but for sale.

We no longer live in the middle ages—

Then why do we cling so stubbornly to medieval ideas—

Perhaps there are good reasons . . . .

"No way has yet been discovered," said a minister recently in the English House of Commons, "by which people can get the things they need, except by buying them out of wages



and salaries" and "there is no way of getting wages and salaries except by working for them," or words to that effect.

"He that will not work neither let him eat," said St. Paul. Why do we still cling to these medieval ideas when we are discussing the condition of the proletariat (I need not remind you that the proletariat is a quite modern invention as far as our civilization is concerned).

And yet we make no such claims in the case of men of property. A man may live on dividends without reproach—then why not on "the dole?"

A man of sufficient capital, shrewdly invested, need not work—then why do we let him eat?

The labourers in the vineyard "received each one a penny" though some had worked all day and some had stood "idle in the market place."

Was it just, according to modern ideas, that the one hour man should be paid as much as the ten hour man?

Then why not say that the Scriptures are wrong?

The reconciliation between St. Paul's saying and the parable of the labourers is not difficult.

Work, payment, food.

Here are three things.

Food is the product and the reward of work as St. Paul says. But pay is not the product of *work*—

Pay, *money* is not the product of *anything*.

Money is a token, a sign that its possessor has power to demand. And demand is proportioned to *need*.

The labourers in the parable were not paid for work done (in this respect they were like directors of companies and shareholders)—

they were paid according to their requirement.

It is not a day's *work* that determines a day's wages, but a day's *living*.

*That's* the point to be grasped.

That's the medieval idea which, in spite of everything, we cling so blindly to.

This is a Christian country—Catholic Church . . . and all that. Shall I be wrong if I assume that, though we don't live in the middle ages, we, as a people, still venerate Christian doctrine?

If so, let us admit, as a general principle,  
that *needs* determine pay, not work.

And if we admit that—

Then let us go on to admit that, just as the product of a country should be distributed according to the people's needs (*not*, as in times of famine, by means of ration tickets, but by distributed purchasing power),

So work should be distributed according to the amount of it to be done and the talents and vocations of the people (specially the vocations—for men are not automatons, psychologically and physiologically 'conditioned' as in some 'brave new world').

Let all have a living wage—salary or what not.

But why should some work all day and some not at all?

What's the difference between "unemployment" and "leisure?"  
Unemployment is simply leisure without the means to enjoy it, to *benefit by it*.

The parable of the labourers—doesn't imply that it was a good thing that some should work all day and some only an hour in the cool of the evening.

It only implies that wages are payment for living not for working. Is it not obvious that if the product is to be distributed—then so also should the labour of producing it?

I'm not talking about finance—about banking.

I'm talking about the general principles of good politics, and it should be the business of "financiers" to discover methods for *making these principles effective*.



Is it not obvious that the two points I have named as being the fundamental principles of good politics (I did not invent them . . . . )

1. St. Paul—work should be distributed.

2. The parable of the labourers—payment is for *living*.

Is it not obvious that these two principles are not considered by our politicians,

And, above all, is it not obvious, that we have not got a financial or monetary system which is compatible with these principles?

Our money system does *not* distribute work

It does not distribute purchasing power.

(perhaps our men of business do not wish it to do so).

And there is another general principle important in this connection.

“The hireling flieth—*because he is an hireling—*

“The hireling—*whose own the sheep are not.*”

That is the formal reason for private property.

*That a man has care for what is his own.*

But what is the point of this?

Why be concerned as to whether the shepherd cares for his sheep?

Because of *the common good*.

The object of private property is not the aggrandisement of the individual—that is where our modern commercial economics are so profoundly wrong.

The object of private property is *the good of the things made* and the object of good things is *the good of all*.

I may say, in parenthesis, the gospel does not imply that the hirelings are bad men and that only employers are righteous—quite the contrary : for as Leo XIII said : “ as many as possible (of the wage slaves) should be induced to become owners ”—that is to say there should be as few employers as possible.

And *that* is to say : those who work should be owners.  
Hence the overwhelming rightness of the claims of the proletariat to-day.

And it follows ; as the Church says :—

“ And if anyone should ask : How must one’s possessions be used ? The Church replies without hesitation : Man should not regard his material possessions as his own but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need.”—(Leo XIII. *Rer. Nov.* para. 19).

And it follows :—

The whole production of a country is for the use of all.  
There is private property in order that good things may be made.  
But the good things are for the good of all.  
Private property is for the sake of public good.

There is no escape from this.

And it follows therefore :—

There is no right, there can be no right to destroy anything,  
while there are men and women in need.

Here again we see how our existing business world, partly by reason of the avarice of men and women—but partly by reason of the stranglehold of the existing monetary method, fails to implement the principles of good politics.

Do we distribute goods to those that need ?

No, only if they can *pay*.

If they cannot pay, we destroy the goods rather than give them away.

Words fail us when we consider the enormity of such a proceeding, the obscenity, the madness, the wickedness of such action.

And we are amazed at the patience, the almost supernatural patience of the poor, the needy, in the face of such wickedness.



I put before you then three principles as the basis of good politics—principles which have most venerable authority—three principles which, *if they are to have effect*, depend upon a compatible monetary system.

1. Work should be distributed (St. Paul).
2. Wages and salaries are payments for living (Unto this last . . . .) and
3. Private property is for the sake of the common good (the hireling).

All these three principles are flouted in our world.

But we may take courage—

For the ideas underlying the monetary policy of our world are now suspect.

The overweening desire of personal gain is no longer given the reverence it received fifty years ago.

That a monopoly of credit creation should be the possession of private persons is now everywhere questioned.

All money is credit

(to have 1d. is to have credit to that amount).

And (as Pius XI has said) : “those who govern credit supply the life-blood to the entire economic body . . . .” (Quad. An. Chap. 3).

Have we not, therefore, full right to demand reform?

We are the people—

In so far as we are ourselves avaricious and grasping, in so far as we batten and fatten on the present economic structure—

in so far as we ourselves, like men of business, value all things in terms of money—

so far we are ourselves to blame for the miseries we suffer.

But we are the people and to a large extent we are at the mercy of a system—a system outside the control of parliament—a system controlled by private corporations for private gain.

What do we ask?

We ask first that full enquiry shall be made, by independent judges (it is no use asking those who control the monopoly to view it disinterestedly . . . .)

Is it much to ask?—full enquiry into a system which so palpably, so pitifully, so dangerously fails to work for the common good.

ERIC GILL



## A WAY OF SALVATION FOR RURAL IRELAND

THE continued drift of families from the countryside into the slums of our towns, and of our young men and women to England cannot but cause great concern. Our anxiety is increased by the fact that the number of young women leaving the country is very great, so that the future of the race may depend on wise action in this matter of urgent national importance. Two things alone will stay this stream from the countryside: (1) a provision of work at a fitting wage whereon a man may marry, and (2) a provision of sufficient homes.

It is necessary to consider both these aspects as one whole, for under present circumstances it is useless to plan houses without at the same time planning work which will provide an income sufficient for the frugal comfort of a family. Therefore, houses require to be built in relation to the work, either work already existing where houses are known to be required, or newly planned work to be provided. The work should decide the locality. For if the house provided be at such distance from the work that it is the cause of expense, loss of time, and fatigue; or if the rent of the house be such that the family cannot maintain frugal comfort, how can there be contentment? Therefore, it is essential to consider work and housing together. Indeed, the absence of work at a proper wage is the root cause both of the housing difficulty and the flight of our young people. In order to provide work throughout the countryside at a living wage, it will be necessary to develop and to carry further our present policy of economic self-sufficiency and a better balanced home production. It will be necessary to widen the whole basis of primary production by large-scale reclamation of bog, drainage of wet farmland and by a National Afforestation Scheme, which latter would ultimately provide a new raw

material and a whole range of new secondary industries based on it. These large scale schemes would absorb the whole of our rural unemployment ; and would also solve the problem of the Gaelteacht, for afforestation gives the winter employment required there. Moreover, these schemes would lay a firm economic basis for a larger expanding population. An afforestation area would require the construction of roads, these roads would, at the same time, open up access to quarries, which would supply native material for our houses.

We now have factories supplying us with manufactured goods previously imported. Those factories are all secondary industry. It is in no way to decry the value of secondary industry to urge and emphasise that primary production of raw material should be further developed ; and developed in such a fashion as to bring every man within the volume of employment. It should be noted that the new primary production suggested not only carries an enormously higher percentage of employment, relatively to the cost undertaken, than the secondary industries that we already have, but will also create a better internal market for that secondary industry. It is to be noted that already the internal market for the farmer is double the value of the external trade. If the community be considered as an organism how can it be healthy, while a large part of it, our unemployed citizens, atrophies unused?

It is of the utmost importance to the country as a whole, not only that these men, our fellow citizens, may be accorded opportunity to maintain themselves and their families by work of human dignity, but also that wages should be adequate, for wages represent the greater part of the net income of the community : that is to say, that the sum total of wages represents the greater part of the purchasing power for food and necessities in that internal market on which both farmers and industrialists depend, the one market which we can expand and develop, and of which we can always be sure. We also require to give close consideration to the stress that the Holy Father has laid

on his direction that the working man should be put into such a position that he may acquire at least such a minimum of private property, through his work, that he may have family security. Such a minimum in the country would appear to be at least a family home and a piece of fertile ground. If family security is to be maintained when acquired, the family home and portion of land would require protective legislation under such acts as the U.S.A. Household Exemption Laws. When we recollect that in our days the natural human need for shelter frequently has such a charge imposed on it through rent, particularly in urban areas, that families may be left with insufficient means for food, not only in slums, but also in the new housing areas, it is evident that these questions are urgent.

#### A RURAL HOUSING SCHEME.

A scheme in two parts, providing a cottage and half an acre for young couples graduating up to a family holding in a term of years.

##### (1) *A National Cottage Scheme.*

To provide as swiftly as possible for the instant and urgent need to stay the flight of our young people to England, and to prevent country families from drifting into slums; these cottages to be provided rent free on certain conditions.

##### (2) *A National Homestead Scheme.*

To enable families in occupation of a national cottage (Scheme 1), on certain payments every week over a period of years, to become owners of a homestead under divisions (a), (b) or (c) of this scheme.

Under the National Cottage Scheme (1) cottages should be built wherever they are at present required or wherever newly provided works of primary production required cottages, say, on the proposed National Afforestation Area, not only for present families, but also to facilitate early marriage of young couples of rural tradition. A small cottage and a half acre plot of land could be provided rent free, on condition that week by week the



sum that would have been rent should be paid as may be arranged under the National Homestead Scheme (2), which would entitle the man after a certain period of years to ownership of :—

- (a) A homestead and an economic holding, or
- (b) A homestead and three to five acres, or
- (c) A homestead and a somewhat larger plot than the half acre of the Cottage Scheme.

It shall be so arranged that by the time the eldest child would normally be approaching adolescence that the family would move from the rent free cottage of the National Cottage Scheme into their own Homestead under the National Homestead Scheme. Their place in the empty cottage being taken on the same terms by another young couple starting life. This scheme has the advantage of putting a certain gentle pressure on families to get on into their own homestead, and thus acquire a minimum of private property.

The half-acre plot under the National Cottage Scheme is a most useful and valuable addition to a labourer's wage. It is of a sufficient size to produce all the vegetables required for a family, some fruit also could be grown. The waste products of the vegetables would go far to keep sufficient poultry to supply a family with eggs. The family should be helped, encouraged, and instructed as to the best mode of making the uttermost use of such a plot. The labourer families of both France and Belgium add greatly to their comfort and security through a system of intensive vegetable growing in such small plots. These French and Belgian methods are well within the capacity of a simple family, but are traditionary in those countries and would require to be taught here. It is no use to provide a family with a plot of ground if they leave it as grass, or at the most use it for potatoes and cabbage. Nor would it be much use to grow a variety of vegetables unless the woman of the house can cook them to the best advantage. Therefore, in order that the ultimate ownership of a homestead and land would be a real security to a family, it would be necessary to regard the half

acre plot not only as a present help, but also as a means of training the family so to use land as to obtain the maximum amount possible for their own consumption. Both intensive vegetable growing, the care of poultry and the type of cooking most useful to the circumstances would require to be taught. It would, perhaps, be necessary to have French or Belgian instructors in the earlier stages of this scheme.

These proposals have the further advantage of affording a continuous training to children under their father and mother, first in working about the half acre plot of the cottage under the first part of the Scheme, and then towards adolescence on their own family land under the second part, the National Homestead Scheme. There is a psychological advantage to children in this move to their own home, their own family private property, being made at an impressionable age. The pride of something of their very own would make for family contentment. It would be desirable that girls as well as boys should be taught the methods of intensive growing of vegetables, through practical handling of these things, not by book work. It will be essential that girls should be taught to cook the variety of vegetables and fruit that the plots could produce, and how best to utilise eggs. It might be stressed, that a French or Belgian instructress might be obtained to start a tradition of the more varied cooking which is practised by quite simple families in their respective countries.

Everything should be done to encourage families to live on the countryside. It would be desirable that farmers should get a certain remission on rates or taxes on a sliding scale according to the number of families living on the farm. The National Cottage Scheme would be of particular use in the case of farms turning to tillage, for in most cases these are without cottages. Where possible cottages could be built on the borders of two or more such farms (so as to leave the amenities of the farm undisturbed). It would also be desirable where possible, to group the cottages, for the social life of these families requires proper consideration.

Institutions, having land or estates on which single men are employed, should be encouraged and perhaps facilitated under a suitable modification of the National Cottage Scheme, to enable these men to marry if they desire. It is to be noted that the addition of a half-acre plot and a cottage to the existing wage of such men would in many cases enable them to marry. Where such institutions have a home farm and cows, it might be possible to provide these men if married with an allowance of milk. Some institutions already do this; if all did, both religious and secular, it would set a beneficial example and influence private employers.

#### DIVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL HOMESTEAD SCHEME.

(a) *A homestead and an economic holding.*

This would be most suitable for agricultural labourers.

(b) *A homestead and a holding of three to five acres.*

This would be suitable for a family whose bread-winner worked in a factory situated in a rural district : or a whole-time forestry man. It should be noted, however, that under Belgian intensive cultivation that five acres of fertile land is not far short of an economic holding. The Belgian method has the paramount advantage of maintaining a much larger population in comfort.

(c) *A homestead and a plot of about  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre.*

This is intended for a labourer of rural tradition, whose work is in a town : yet he is able to live on the outskirts of the town. The size of this plot would have to depend on local circumstances.

It is difficult to see how this, or any scheme on a sufficiently extensive scale to prevent the continued depopulation of Ireland could be financed out of taxation or out of borrowing by a series of public loans. In face of the urgency of the problem, old methods of finance which are unable to meet the national needs require to be superseded, and we must not shrink from the employment of new methods which will enable the Government to prevent the further decay of the countryside in view of the



urgency and rather terrifying importance of the matter. Both the National Cottage Scheme and the National Homestead Scheme depend for their practicability on national financial autonomy. Our present monetary system virtually precludes such a development and such utilisation of the natural resources of Ireland as would permit our population to expand and to remain in the country. A boldly planned National Reconstruction directed towards widening the whole basis of primary production, and a financial system that would permit us to do so, would enable us to stop the flight of our young people—and also to use our own Irish stone to build houses for them. Such a National Reconstruction would at once lessen the dangerous economic orientation towards England; and lessen it, not by decrease of external trade, but by such an increase of our own primary production and internal trade as would increase in ratio the value of the whole internal market to the external trade. It would permit every Irishman to make a livelihood and to remain in Ireland.

B. B. WATERS

## *DEATH AND HER BEASTS, IGNOBLE BEASTS*

The dried pus of vultures drags the horizon.  
The noble beasts retired, their turn now, dried  
Mouths of my tears are death's vultures craving saliva :  
They would feed sick life on the smashed mouths of the weak  
Whose nostrils death has plugged with stale love-smells  
And suicide charms with racked face in a wall of marble,  
Their eyes decharged have numbness that looks like peace.

Smeller-out of strangers ! curious Death  
Your noble beasts were not fearful for they,  
The emerald bergs of doom, Cybele and the drums,  
Startled my stupour into spite at least :  
Now your corrupt sweet pleading through my friends  
Smooths me like cambric on an infant's flesh  
You would enchant with physical dances me  
That cannot afford to believe your vultures peacocks.

Unexplained tears suddenly blur my courage  
And desert movements in the breast shaking  
The forts I built so well already ravaged  
By sleep, by the cold, by the intransigent light  
Make your back-alleys seem imperative  
There is none so much as you, none you, I think of.

But I turn to move. The autarchic world-specked galaxy  
Grows without sound like flowers, man's bit of air  
Throngs, deafening ears that could distinguish once  
Noises of rivers among the noises of seas :  
Yet, Sacker of crumbling towns, I will not agree  
To the proposal of peace you made to my friends.

Attack me in the dark, I'll extreme fear  
With the first of all landscapes given its eyes  
In the frantic group of naked man and horse ;  
With the cheering of shredded men in lost forts  
And to go on with, the length of to-day and to-morrow,  
The knowledge that lifting needles make the cloth.

DENIS DEVLIN

# LET'S MAKE OUR HIGHWAYS SAFEWAYS

THE time has come when logical principles must be applied to the lay-out of our roads and street-ways. The high speed of present-day traffic demands the concentrated attention of road builder, and road user, if the general public is to receive fair treatment. It is no exaggeration whatever to state that no department in the State shows a greater disregard for logic and commonsense than the authorities responsible for the control of our highway system. No responsible authority will apparently realise—or admit—that what was good enough for an era when 20–25 m.p.h. was the absolute limit in speed is hopelessly inefficient—not to say appallingly dangerous—when a large proportion of our road users (including 10 ton passenger 'buses and 7 ton lorries) travel consistently at speeds of 50 to 55 m.p.h. Private cars are now capable of speeds ranging from a mile to close on a mile-and-a-half a minute. The writer has frequently *averaged* 50 m.p.h. on 200 mile trips which means that this car has been travelling for long periods at speeds between 60 and 70 m.p.h. Many people may be inclined to say that speeds of such a high order should not be permitted on the road. Granted that we may be no happier, and we certainly are much less safer, in this age of increased speeds all round, the fact, nevertheless, remains that every road user takes all the advantage that he can from the increased speed capabilities of the present-day road vehicle. As well ask the present-day city dweller to walk to his office, or to his work, as try by force of public opinion, legal regulations, or otherwise, to reduce modern transport speeds to the undeniably safe pace of horse-drawn traffic. Short of a complete ban on all motor-propelled transport, or the definite limitation of petrol engines to a certain *maximum developed h.p.* (e.g., "10" for private cars and "30" for 'buses, lorries, trucks, etc.),<sup>1</sup> it is utterly impossible to place a workable speed-limit on these types of vehicle. Needless to state,

<sup>1</sup> The following figures represent the normal actually developed H.P. obtainable from standard petrol motors to-day:—

Cars	taxed as	8-H.P. develop from	16	to	24-B.H.P.
"	" "	10	" "	24	" 40 "
"	" "	12	" "	35	" 45 "
"	" "	16	" "	45	" 90 "
Trucks	" "	30	" "	60	" 90 "
Buses, etc.	" "	45	" "	90	" 120 "



human nature is the chief obstacle towards the attainment of a reasonable speed limit. The amazing power of the present-day motor vehicle is a fascinating temptation to even the easiest-going John Citizen. Few drivers can resist that Hitler-Mussolini feeling engendered by the possession of such a gloriously energetic creation. Others love speed for speed's sake. It does not surprise one, therefore, to find that average motoring speeds have increased greatly during the past few years. Our ordinary highways now carry a large proportion of heavy traffic which travels actually at far higher speeds than those normally prevailing on our isolated, and carefully-signalled, railways.

It is obviously impossible to institute a "safety-always" policy (of the railway pattern) in our highway system. There remains, therefore, only one way of reducing road-risks to a minimum. Admit the facts regarding the speed capabilities of motor traffic, and then bring commonsense to bear by modifying our roads—as far as is practically possible—to suit these fast moving vehicles. In making these roads safer for motors one will incidentally make them safer for all other road users. Then, and not till then, can one equitably proceed to place the onus for accident on the shoulders of the fastest moving party in the case of any unfortunate roadside impact (of which more anon !).

#### SAFETY-FIRST ROAD ESSENTIALS.

What are the vital features of an efficient and fair-to-all highway system? In order of importance I place them as follows:

- I. A non-skid road surface (to provide the vital contact between wheel, tyre, horse-shoe, etc., and the roadway).
- II. Adequate visibility (to give every road-user a fair chance of avoiding collision with another road-user).
- III. Scientific principles applied to the lay-out of cross roads, corners, bridges, bottle necks, etc., as far as is financially possible.
- IV. A road lighting system which does not (as does the normal one in vogue to-day) increase the danger of night travel.
- V. *The institution of a rigid 30 m.p.h. speed limit in places where high speed is definitely unfair to the general public.*
- VI. Heavier penalties where dangerous or selfish driving is proved against a motor driver.

#### (I.)—ROAD SURFACE.

The interests of *all* road users must be considered when deciding on the ideal road surface. Livestock, such as cattle and

horses (which, let it be remembered, have just as much right to the road as our fleetest car, or 'bus) and pedestrians, demand a road which is *skid-proof, reasonably smooth and not too hard.*

### *Surface (or top dressing).*

Cyclists, motorists, and other wheeled traffic desire a surface which is again definitely *skid proof* and *reasonably smooth*. Its hardness or softness is here not a vital factor.

One thing is absolutely certain. No road user—or for that matter no one with any knowledge of the science of normal road transport—would choose the glass-smooth skin which apparently is the ideal of so many road builders.

If one could revert to a whitish colour in our road surface it would prove extremely welcome at night. Older readers will remember the wonderful visibility factor of the pre-war roadway.

Analyse these requirements and we find that our ideal road demands:

- (a) Non-skidding qualities.
- (b) A smooth, not too hard, surface.
- (c) If possible a light-colour top dressing.

After personally achieving a mileage of over 300,000 on all types of road designed during the past twenty years I believe that a rival has yet to be found for a chip-dressed tarred road.

### *The Ideal.*

The net-work of small breaks and projections between the individual stone chips provides the vital non-skid quality. The steam roller gives the requisite smoothness. The tar binding supplies that necessary "give," which is so essential to the comfort of non-wheeled traffic. Incorporate a light colour in the tar and this type of road satisfies every requirement, with the additional advantage that it is largely home produced.

No so-called rival such as asphalt, or concrete, qualifies for serious consideration when examined on the foregoing logical lines.

## SAFETY FACTOR NO. II.

Adequate visibility to give every road user a fair chance of avoiding collision with another road user.

### (II.)—VISIBILITY.

Adequate visibility is obviously a vital requirement if high speed is to be indulged in safely. In railway traffic tremendous attention has been paid to this question, yet it is obvious that there is not a fraction of the need for such visibility owing to the

elaborate signalling system incorporated, and to the fact that the train cannot leave a definite track which is maintained completely free until after its passage. Expense obviously prevents a radical clearing of buildings, etc., from road junctions, where existing obstacles of this kind are concerned. It is only commonsense, however, to ban the erection of houses, shops, etc., within a distance of, say, 30 yards of any cross-roads. Logic again calls for the existence of a 15 or 20 yard zone between the kerb of any road, and the front of any building, or high wall (*i.e.*, wall over 4½-ft. high) adjoining such roads. It seems incredible how our City Fathers remain so utterly uninterested in the exercise of logical principles of the foregiven kind. Dublin City, for instance, is destroyed by hideous skyscraper posters erected practically to a post at vital canal bridge crossings. Many of these junctions were bad enough before one's visibility of crossing traffic was completely eliminated at the most vital point by these wood-and-paper monstrosities.

In addition to the removal of opaque obstructions around crossings, junctions and bends, nearly every road junction will require treatment in a constructive way. That is to say, roads should be widened to the greatest possible extent where they join each other, or bend on a short radius. Low grass islands should be erected where two (or more) main roads converge, or where secondary roads lead directly into trunk routes.

#### *White Lines on Dangerous Bends.*

Where the existence of buildings, rivers, bridges (or other too-expensive-to-move article) prevents the attainment of the required visibility white lines should be painted (or sunk) along the centre of this whole stretch of road. Danger signals should also be erected at the usual distance (approx. 100 yards) before the crossings or bends. (This has actually been done in certain districts by progressive-minded road surveyors, but unfortunately such logical action is yet the exception rather than the rule in Ireland).

Where danger points of the foregiven kind occur in populated areas (*e.g.*, in suburbs of cities, villages, near schools, etc.) a rigid 30 m.p.h. limit should be enforced.

"Passing-out" (*viz.*, the catching up of one vehicle by another) should be prohibited at all danger points of the previous kind—or wherever the road is excessively narrow. The letters "N.P." ("No Passing") might be combined with the "30 m.p.h." sign-post markings as a standard rule. No one in his senses should want to pass out another vehicle at points where



visibility, for even one vehicle, is at a minimum. Nevertheless, many road users choose these most dangerous of all parts of the route to prove their prowess at the wheel. If all motorists possessed a reasonable amount of commonsense, plus a small quantity of politeness, the infliction of such regulations, of course, would be absolutely unnecessary. Unfortunately an ignorant, and usually ill-mannered, percentage of motor drivers always act as though they possessed a unique right to the greater part of the road. Only by legal penalty can such gentry be forced to admit the rights of other road users.

### (III.)—SCIENTIFIC ROAD LAY-OUT.

A wonderful improvement in the lot of the average road user could be achieved if one were able to start off with a scientific system of road design. It is obviously, however, far too expensive to redesign the lay-out at present in existence. All that one can suggest is that our road surveyors should strive to achieve the maximum efficiency as regards these forementioned factors of:

- (1) Safe road surface.
- (2) Adequate visibility.
- (3) Generous sign-posting and painting of white lines, and
- (4) Modern road illumination.

Ultra-modern design of the type which receives considerable publicity (per pictorial reproduction) in our newspapers may be all very nice as a theoretical idea. Bearing in mind the fact that Ireland is comparatively a very small country and that the housing question is only on the verge of development, I fail to see the need for the high-speed, straight-through motor-road of the Continental pattern. Machines of the Auto-gyro type will undeniably give the Irish citizen of the next generation all the direct point-to-point high speed that he may want.

### (IV.)—LOGICAL ROAD LIGHTING.

#### *Light Without Blinding.*

There is at least one village in the Irish Free State which boasts a modern street-lighting system. I regret to state, however, that Cabinteely, Co. Dublin, seems to be the shining exception to the normal rule. For some mysterious reason, the average lamp standard is designed to throw 50 per cent. of its illumination into the heavens. In doing so it effectively functions as a dazzling element of unusual power, and, furthermore, occupies an unusually stragetic position where ability to blind all road users is concerned. The Gilbertian situation thus arises.

that a traveller can see better in an unlighted area than in a so-called well-lit one.

As Cabinteeley demonstrates, the cure for this foolish state of affairs lies in the shielding of the main lighting elements by reflectors, which cut off the sky-going beams and focus them on the road where they add to, instead of detracting from, the good work.

(V.)—WHEN SPEED IS DANGEROUS.

*When a 30 m.p.h. limit becomes necessary.*

There always, of course, comes a time, or a place, when (or where) speed becomes dangerous in itself. The place, the driver, the type of vehicle, weather conditions, are the vital factors in such a state of affairs. 30 m.p.h. may be highly dangerous in one instance. 60 m.p.h. may be perfectly safe on another occasion. It is not the actual speedometer reading that decides the verdict. It is the method used by the driver—as revealed by his subsequent action—that will convict or absolve him of dangerous driving.

Given a properly laid-out roadway system it can be taken as a general working rule that the fastest moving vehicle will logically and quite fairly be held responsible for the average road accident. As between pedestrians, cyclists, horse-drawn traffic, cattle, etc., and motor-propelled vehicles, there can be no doubt as to which is the "fastest mover." In the average accident involving slow and fast-moving traffic, therefore, one can equitably voice the poor man's slogan:

"The motor is to blame."

In only the rare instance where a road-user completely ignores the rule of the road (*e.g.*, by turning suddenly and without warning into an opposing stream of traffic, or by cutting out behind another vehicle in crowded streets, etc.) can the motorist logically hold himself free from blame.

Taking the existing motor car as a fair example of a potentially dangerous vehicle it may safely be said that 30 m.p.h. marks the maximum speed which should be permitted at so-called death traps of the twisty-road, or bad corner, type. Narrow suburban streets, curving roads, running over bridges, schools, quays, etc., etc., should also be treated as 30 m.p.h. areas. As reflex action adjusts itself to increased speeds this arbitrary limit can probably be increased. At the moment approximately 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. of the population (motoring and otherwise) prove unreliable in emergency at speeds approximately above the 30 m.p.h. mark in the above-mentioned circumstances.

*Night-Driving Dangers.*

The shades of night, furthermore, bring an added responsibility to the motorist. Speeds which can be attained in safety during the day may easily prove highly dangerous at night. The power and focussing of head lamps are highly variable factors. (Very few motorists of my acquaintance keep their lamps in a properly focussed condition). The visibility of different road users varies enormously. Whether due to their height above the road surface, the fact that they move along in an unusually inconspicuous way, their narrow width, or some other unascertained peculiarity, cyclists are astonishingly difficult to see at night. I write both as cyclist and motorist, when I state that there is a genuine and vital need for rear lights on cycles. As a cyclist I see far more need for fitting a lamp to face rearwards than to face frontwards. Again and again as a motorist I have noted with satisfaction the good visibility factor of the completely lampless cyclist who travels towards me. His face, or hands, stand out clearly in the lights of my lamp. Far more often, however, I have shuddered when attempting to analyse the terribly poor visibility factor of the rear-reflectorless cyclist whom I overhaul. In certain circumstances (such as in mist, or rain on a warmish night) he comes nearer to the ghost of the spook story than anything else on this earth!

Of course, the vital element as regards fast travel at night is the fact that every road-user is responsible for seeing where he goes. No legal onus rests on a cyclist to make himself conspicuous in motorists' or any one else's, interest. Courtesy to other road users—apart from interest in his own existence—suggests, however, that he consider this question of difficult identification. The motorist in his turn will reciprocate by suiting his speed to the ruling visibility.

*Laziness Leads Deathwards.*

The foolishness of such a plea as "I was blinded by the lights of that on-coming vehicle," needs little emphasis. No one in his senses steps into a maelstrom of traffic if he is blind. How, then, can any motorists claim to be sane if they fail to slow down (or come to a complete stop) when they are blinded by the dazzle of car, street, shop, or other lights? Pure laziness is responsible for illogical thought, or action, of this kind. The same reason, it must be admitted, is at the root of a great deal of bad driving. Inertia, rather than selfishness, is the Achilles' heel of the motoring fraternity.



## (VI.)—PUNISHMENT THAT DETERS.

*Personal Penalties for Offending Motorists.*

Where a motor-driver is definitely proved guilty of dangerous driving the penalty for the offence should be greatly increased. In this connection, I can think of no more weighty deterrent than a partial removal of that insurance policy system which eliminates financial loss to the offender. This suggestion may sound rather drastic but it is undeniably a fact that a wound in the pocket is the sorest of all wounds where the normal individual is concerned. If a minimum fine of, say, £25 had to be personally lodged in court in every case where serious damage had resulted owing to his action, I am convinced that a notable decrease would result in the number of motor accidents on Irish roads. In cases where death has occurred, or where the offending motorist has taken any drink, the onus of responsibility thus resting on the motorist, such sum should be increased to, say, £100. Balance of any larger award made would be payable in either instance by the defendant's insurance company.

Only by making serious motoring accidents really expensive to the guilty party will the general standard of driving be improved. The driver of a high-speed vehicle must not be permitted to escape his normal responsibilities and achieve per a small annual payment what is in effect "insurance for his wrong-doing."

With regard to that dastardly habit of "running away" after an accident, practised by certain "black sheep" of the flock ; I suggest that a prison sentence (in addition, of course, to the foregoing personal fines) be the invariable penalty of such offence. If this particular crime is not soon eliminated the registration authorities will have no option but to greatly increase the size of rear number-plates at present in vogue.

R. HUMPHREYS

## THE SCYTHE

ALFRED LUNDY was land-steward to John Harrison. He was a plump and well-found man of medium height and had a large, brown, yard-brush moustache of which he was very proud. He could sing kingdom come like a good one, and his amens were sonorous and long-sounding. He was very well aware that the louder he prayed and sang every Sunday in the Meeting House the safer was his job. Mrs. John Harrison was a religious maniac with a liking for big policemen and the wife of a philandering, impotent husband, and she seemed to judge all men by the sound of their amens.

On a Monday morning in middle June in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six, Lundy stood on the Lismore Road and overlooked a broad meadow of lush grass bottomlicked by the shallow slugging Bann snailing under a sunstreaked tunnel of arched trees. Two men were working in this meadow. They were scything a narrow strip around the edges preparatory to horse-mowing. One of these men was standing upright and lighting a pipe and talking to the industrious one. Lundy cursed thickly and decapitated an unoffending nettlehead with his ashplant. He pocked delved and produced a tory whistle.

Thurrrrrreeeeee ! Went the whistle with its corkpea bubbling the clean sound thrummingly and the men looked up. "O'Reilly !" went Lundy, his voice bubbling with nonsensical rage. "What the bloody hell do y'think y're doin' ?" O'Reilly pocketed his smoking pipe and cast his eyes over the shaved grass for a whetstone. He whetted like fury along the rasping edge. A thickskinned thumb ran along the keenly rough edge that would cut a throat. His shoulders hunched a little as his legs spraddled and his torso swung rhythmically and headheavy grass fell in shivering segments shivering over to lie evenly flat. A frog was easily cut in two and the front end crawled uselessly into cover, but the rear end stayed behind to only twitch.

A small cough from a female throat ahemed warningly behind Lundy and he spun around forelock touching and somewhat embarrassed. Muttering something about not being able to watch them the faithful taskmaster jumped convincingly over the hedge and sprawled on hands and knees with a faint belch and ran towards the men with blustering importance to uselessly

scold O'Reilly. The latter was now working manfully and his eager scythe was biting wickedly into the standing grass with pure rhythm and laying curved rows behind. He looked up as Lundy approached and his blue eyes were hard. Lundy changed his unspoken tone.

"Christ, Ned! What do y'mean an' herself lookin' at ye?"

"Sure I was only lightin' me pipe." He spoke slowly and with the softer, rounder accent of the southerner. The other slave never looked up and scythed away like an unfree serf, and about him there was a fear-dependance that O'Reilly lacked. The latter was a big, free man with powerful shoulders and powerful, sunstained hands. Lundy hated the illusive pride that hovered about him, but looked at the heavy shoulder-muscles water-rippling under the sweat-stuck shirt and turned away.

"He's a bloody slave-driver," O'Reilly muttered.

"What's that y'said?" asked Lundy, coming pugnaciously back.

"Well—since ye heard me, that's what ye are."

O'Reilly straightened his back and rested the scythe-blade on the ground. They measured each other with sullen eyes and Lundy was the first to flinch. O'Reilly smiled slowly and contemptuously. Lundy trembled with rage and slid his ashplant through his hand so that the heavy head came first. O'Reilly's eyes followed the stick's movement. Lundy was powerless and afraid. He knew that John Harrison liked O'Reilly and liked O'Reilly's pretty young wife. Harrison, although a blackguard, was a fair man and always listened to both sides of a story and, furthermore, Lundy knew that O'Reilly knew the true history of the Event of the Missing Bullock. O'Reilly's right hand never left the scythe-haft and a single movement could swing it easily forward so that its terrible blade would cut the legs from under a man. Lundy was afraid. Abruptly, he turned away and walked up the meadow. O'Reilly's rhythmic movements recommenced and his powerful shoulders drove the blade through the grass and left enormous swathes behind. It gave him pleasure to feel the power of his own strength.

His movement suddenly ceased as the blade struck a hidden stone with a jarring sparky scrape, and he cursed and looked ruefully at the turned edge. He placed the scythe gingerly over his left shoulder so that the long haft curved down his back and the curved scimitar of the blade sprang cruelly out before him. Deftly and with quick sensitive strokes the stone rang along the blade and the arched trees over the Bann sent back belated echoes.



After that, the two men worked silently for hours without stopping, save to whet their blades. The bell rang at twelve and they straightened their backs and walked stiffly to a hedge of hawthorn that was ruddily splashed with copper patches of beech-quicks. They plunged their scythes safely into this hedge and tramped heavily up to the farmyard. Ten other men were already lounging about the yard and these two joined them after getting their newspapered lunches from the carpenter's shop. O'Reilly sat down on a long ladder laid lengthwise along a wall and ate his lunch.

"Get t'hell off that lather!" Lundy's voice came abusively from the doorway of his lodge. "D'ye want to break it?" He had just lost an argument with his frigid shrew of a wife. O'Reilly arose as Lundy approached to fussily look at the ladder. "Christ! It's a wonder y'haven't more sense to be sittin' on a lather like that!" The other men groundlooked like guilty boys, but O'Reilly stared at him.

"It wud take more'n that to break it," he slowly said, with his dull and aggravating smile.

"Who the blazes asked you for y're opinion?"

O'Reilly shrugged and his face got red. He threw the remains of his distasteful lunch to some fowl, and watched them fight over it as he filled his pipe. He backed close to the low wall surrounding the manure heap, and put his two hands behind him to vault up backwards to nurse one knee with dovetailed fingers, slingmaking. His hands were trembling and sweaty.

"How's the wife, O'Reilly?" asked one of his companions, with a mean eye and a black moustache, and the others laughed knowingly. O'Reilly coloured and answered that she was fine.

"I heerd Harrison's droppin' in to see her?" The others laughed again.

"What's to stop him?" O'Reilly's blood ran thicker at the suggested insult. "The wife'll take care of Harrison an' if she doesn't, then, by Christ! I will!" His voice almost arose to a shout and he glowered around at these men and they laughed nervously and less knowingly, and looked curiously after his tall figure, as it swung out of the yard.

He wandered up the road and sat down under a tree. His sight flowed down the green rolling of the meadow, that waved like the hair of women before the light breeze. There was full beauty in this June day and each breath he drew felt as if he were taking some of this beauty into himself. This beauty made him bitter, because he hated his job and hated Lundy, and he knew that his companions disliked him for some reason. He

was a southerner and spoke with a soft brogue, and these northerners were of a different black strain. He felt as if he were tied or somehow strongly restrained from being himself, and he chafed and was restless. His big hands buried themselves in soft, rabbit-scraped mould that lay before a fresh burrow, and he allowed the earth to trickle coolly through his fingers . . . . The bell rang again and recalled him to work, and he arose with relief and stretched himself.

All that hot evening he and his companion ate their scythe-way around the meadow. They were down by the Bann by the afternoon and it ran with quiet and cool secrecy under its sun-streaked tunnel of trees. It was cool and green and shady, with a green sun-mist of bird-songs filtering through the leaves. O'Reilly stood looking at the snailing stream and suddenly dropped his scythe and plunged under the trees and slid down the steep bank. His feet splashed into the water and it eased their burning with pleasant coolness. He scooped up handfuls of the dark water and splashed it over his burning face. A big trout shimmered like a grey water-sprite beside a brown stone and then darted upstream with the speed of light. He stood listening—observing the strange river-life that was about him . . .

"Hi! Ned! Here's Lundy!" The voice of his companion came warningly and he cursed and scrambled up the steep bank, his fingers biting into the clammy, yellow clay. Lundy was standing in the meadow with a gleeful snarl on his face.

"Jesus, Ned!" he complained with impersonal heat. "What the hell's the use of swingin' the lead like that? Damnit! I can't be always watchin' ye."

All the rage in O'Reilly leaped into his throat in a hard lump, and seemed to impede his very breathing.

"God damn it! I work harder's five men an' ye know it!" His hands reached out in an involuntary movement, as if beseeching justice, and in his hands were two little sausages of yellow clay that he had unknowingly retained since scrambling up the steep river bank. Then his rage melted into a cold disgust for Lundy and for himself. He was ashamed and debased. Strange currents chased wantonly through him and he stood like a fool—gaping and surprised as if something foreign were in his stomach. Then all his restlessness focussed on Lundy. He was the tourniquet twisting the binding cords around his soul—tighter—tighter—and, suddenly, something burst.

He walked slowly over to his scythe and picked it up. The blade was shining dully in the evening sun. He caught the haft so tightly that his fingers cracked and he just stood looking

at the blade. Lundy had not finished with him and walked closer, saying something. O'Reilly pivoted on his heels, his body rigid and his arms rigid. The blade whipped around in a wide arc. Lundy yelled and jumped back. He should have closed, and then the awkward tool would have been useless as a weapon. But he jumped backwards and the point dug into his side and through his clothes and into his stomach. It ripped through clothes and stomach and came away with blood on it. The force of his movement carried O'Reilly right around so that the blade completed a circle. Lundy did not know that he was so badly hurt. He was frightened and stumbled away, yelling for help. His guts began to slip through the gash. They slipped out in lengthening loops and when he saw his own intestines hanging out, he fell on his face in a faint.

O'Reilly crouched and looked at him. He was motionless and emotionless. He had not seen Lundy's guts hanging out, but somehow he knew. Lundy commenced to rise and tried to drag himself forward over the ground. O'Reilly sprang forward and stood over him. He hesitated because he did not know how to use the scythe effectively. Then he grasped it by the head and plunged the blade down between Lundy's shoulders. Putting his whole weight on the blade he shoved it right through Lundy and into the ground.

The heels of O'Reilly's companion could not be seen for dust, as dashed up the meadow roaring for help and that O'Reilly was mad. O'Reilly smiled because he knew that he was not mad. There was even no fear in him and, if he felt any emotion at all, it was one oddly akin to shame. He lighted his pipe and looked around for the whet-stone before he pulled the blade out of Lundy's back. Gingerly, he placed the tool over his left shoulder, so that the long curved haft curved down his back and the curved scimitar of the blade sprang cruelly out before him. Deftly and with quick and sensitive strokes the stone rang along the blade . . . . He hunched his shoulders as his legs spraddled a little and his torso swung rhythmically and head-heavy grass fell . . . His late companion was still shouting . . . .

"What in hell are'y doin' here, O'Reilly?" It was Lundy's voice. "The bell's gone a half-hour ago!"

O'Reilly arose with unbelief in his eyes and looked curiously at Lundy's fat paunch before he walked away.

TERENCE O'REILLY



## DANSE MACABRE

IN Martin Éamonn Joyce's shed above Derryinver, the céilidhe was going on.

The old lorry had been moved for the night and it stood outside in the bohereen with the moonlight dabbling over it like cold water and the shadows in the crevices in its old, cracked sides looking as if they had been filled with pitch.

Past midnight, and the hilarity of fatigue took hold of everyone. Boys and girls danced furiously. The concrete floor smoked with the dust battered out of it by heavy, hobnailed boots.

Half sets they danced, mostly. Three lots of four in the length of the shed. Twelve at a time ; twenty-four feet, of which twelve feet wore the hobnails.

The place inside shook. It smelt of hot humanity ; there was a reek of stale turf smoke of warm homespuns ; and a thick, heavy, all-pervading stench from four paraffin lamps, which flared and smoked in the eddying swirls of air created by the movements of the dancers. Shouts of encouragement from those seated, shrieks of laughter from the girls dancing, thunder and shuffle of feet on the concrete, sometimes drowned the wailing of Páidín's accordeon. Now and again its voice would rise crazily, holding the rhythm, throwing the melody to the stars.

Outside the moonlight flooded down, filling the lake, flowing through the trees on the hillside, freezing where it struck the white gable of Martin's house. Miles away over the shining water to the west the light from Aran winked, pale pink, like a match in limelight. Peace was outside, and quietness.

Turbulence was in the shed. Dust, smoke, the faint pungence of damp concrete from the walls, the deep shadows dancing and playing hide and seek in time with the music among the grimy beams and rafters, hiding and displaying by turns cold, naked patches of glistening rust on the inside of the corrugated iron roof, all lent an air of confusion. In the middle of the floor, where the feet were beating and circling most, there was an ugly patch of motor oil, which looked like blood. This was a half year's accumulation from the sump of the lorry which was decrepid, oozing gently when at rest.

Through all, over all, the voice of the accordeon rose and fell painfully, hysterically, great asthmatic blasts of wind calling the bass notes huskily into action. Missed notes, tones lengthened

to shrieks, mis-shapen sounds, distorted phrases, discords, chased one another like the shadows on the roof.

And an old woman exclaimed wheezily to her neighbour :

“Wonderful good night, thanks be to God.”

“Devil a better,” her neighbour replied, after which he spat some tobacco juice on to the floor.

And the céilidhe went on. Twenty-four feet, twelve with hobnails, coming, going ; circling, tapping ; thumping, beating ; crossing to the wall, chaining and back again ; in a space seven yards by ten, while Páidín’s fingers persisted, stumbling and racing, unceasing.

Nobody noticed the Ciaróg.

He appeared first from under a seat, midway in the side of the shed, opposite the patch of oil that looked like blood. He dodged the hem of an old woman’s red flannel petticoat, resting on the ground. Contemplating it a moment with waving antennae, he seemed to think of climbing, then he set off determinedly to cross the shed.

Ten feet to the oil patch ; ten feet beyond ; and from the tips of those waving antennae to the blunt, quivering tail, the creature measured scarcely a quarter of an inch.

Steadily he made his way onwards until he was directly under the drumming feet, unconscious of the huge, hobnailed boots belting brutally round, over and past him. High-heeled shoes smacked the ground within inches, tapped once, twice, nearer, then lifted and sailed away. Whole avalanches of feet passed and re-passed, stamping, scraping, beating the ground and smothering the little body with dust.

Undeterred, he proceeded, patient, undeviating, until he reached the enormous splash of oil. A whiff of the foul stuff caused him to falter, pause, turn uncertainly. A boot struck into the patch, thickened from dust and exposure. A shoe swept past, almost brushing the atom of uncertainty with the sensitive little feelers. Another boot came screaming out of the void above, a shoe, a boot. Still he paused, uncertain, unhurried.

The next boot came sweeping on like a thunderbolt. The Ciaróg moved. He would go round the monstrous lake. The merciless mass of steel and leather crashed in the place where he had been, tapped, lifted and was gone.

The journey round the oil patch was a slow affair ; a series of stops, turns, searchings, false starts. The accordeon wailed more loudly, more swiftly. The dancers quickened their pace. The floor became a veritable grinding mill and dust rose in little puffs. The shape of the oil patch was changed, extended. It seemed as if the number of feet had multiplied.

Unhurried, the ciaróg pursued his way, stopping, turning, starting, almost in time with the music. The careering, milling feet swept close.

At last it was accomplished. The huge, foul lake was left behind. Once more he followed a straight line, moving forward smoothly, while the great brogues thundered and laughed. For a little space the floor was clear, before the dancers swirled and chained again, surrounding him.

Back and forth they went, up and down, the feet seeming like things gone mad. Once a high-heeled shoe swept down, touching him, altering his direction a fraction, then it was gone, lifting, sailing swiftly through the air, to give place to a cruel mass of steel and leather which swooped, struck and lightly swept the ciaróg to the wall, before belting on to the floor with a grinding sound and a puff of dust.

There followed a short struggle, legs waving like antennae, helplessly feeling the air, striving for balance, before he was on his feet again, commencing to climb the wall. Again there was deliberation, unconcern, steady progress, up, up, up . . .

Six inches over the ground, in the damp concrete, there was a crevice. Into this the ciaróg entered. And on the floor the dance ceased and began again, the accordeon wailing dismally.

Midway through the next dance a pair of antennae appeared, waving tenderly at the mouth of the crevice. A moment later another pair appeared beside the first, after which two black, glistening bodies commenced the journey down the wall. A couple of seconds' circling uncertainty, before both commenced to travel, unhurriedly towards the oil patch and the red cataract of petticoat beyond.

The seemed, as they reached the great ugly splash in the middle of the floor, to become possessed of a sort of anxiety. One lagged behind the other slightly, both were pressed close to the ground as they furtively traversed the multitudinous bumps and hollows. Down among the dust, not trying to evade death, yet escaping hundreds of deaths in a minute. Pounding, battering, feet crashing crazily about them; a pandemonium of sound, a wild, ever-changing patchwork of light and shadow; the swishing of huge forces brushing past them through the filth-laden air, failed to discourage the small bodies as they kept on, on, on . . . pictures of tireless industry.

Circumnavigated, the oil patch lay behind. On came the two little live things, inexorably, rapidly, like microscopic tanks in a weird no-man's land.

Half the distance between the oil-patch and the red petticoat



had been covered when death came, cruelly. A great boot swept down ; tapped, lifted, sailed away, leaving a little blot, glistening grimly where the foremost of the insects had been.

A few inches behind, the second little unit came forward rapidly, reached the little blot of blood and black shell, paused, stopped. The antennae felt the air, brushed the tiny circle of wetness. The creature backed away, repulsed.

Panic enveloped the little body. Back went the antennae, flat, pressed back flat like a horse's ears. It became electrified, running, running, running, straight and mechanically from that awful damp spot which was rapidly becoming congealed with dust. Mightily the boots and shoes swept past, whining and whistling, taking sparks out of the floor.

Definitely, the music had quickened. There was a stench of sweat, stale breath and tobacco. All sense of time was lost, and the accordeon cried out painfully.

Only a few inches lay between the ciaróg and the red petticoat. The little thing seemed to have become blind. It gave an impression of terrific hurry, stumbling and rolling from side to side in its progress, like a ship in a high sea.

It reached the petticoat, was in the act of climbing into a fold on the ground, when the old woman stood up. She was clapping her hands. The accordeon galloped, howling and grunting. The ciaróg was shaken to the ground.

For a moment he lay there, pitiably still, legs folded. Then he commenced struggling. Again his legs were waving, again there came the tremendous effort to regain his balance. Swiftly the dance came to an end. There came a veritable avalanche of feet, and the old woman stepped aside quickly, cackling like a hen. The ciaróg was beginning to crawl again. Then a boot came screaming out of the shadows. There was a puff of dust, a sound of steel on grit and when it lifted again there were two microscopic blotches on the floor strangely like the oil patch in the middle, which looked like blood.

FLANNÁN O'FLAHERTY

## LA BEAUTÉ

Có n-álainn mé, a dhonnaíocht, a's líog éipí i mbruadar,  
Tagann gac n-aon im éilíob dá éneadóir i ndiairí a céile  
Mo éilíob ag taoscadh gráda 'na tinteit ins an éigse  
Gráda có taol-téangtaíocht 's có buan leis an dúlra.  
Táim mar sphinx fá rún im suiríde san aer go ríogda  
Có bán leis an eala 's mo éiríde mar sneacta ionnam ;  
Is fuat liom an luadail cuireas liní as ionad,  
Ní deirim gáire ná ní goilim riann nó éiríde.

Panfaíocht éigse ós cóir mo stáir 's mo cumta móiríde  
A fuair mé i ndeallraim na gcarraí cuimne is mó móiríde,  
Éigse ag gabáil do'n stuadair gear go ceann a saoil ;  
Óir tá dá bríocht agam a meallas an t-aosgráda cuim,  
Dá sgáitín iadán ag tabairt breis áille do gac ní :  
Dá súil, dá súil móra lán de'n tsoiléaraíocht buain !

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

## BRISE MARINE

Mo truaí an éolann fóiríocht !—do léigeads gac uile leabhar.  
Teicéad i gcéin ! Mothuigim go bfuil éanlaíocht as a meabair  
A beirí íoir an gcubair anáitíocht a's an spéir !  
Faic, ná sean-gairríocht dá deallad i súil soiléir,  
Ní coisgíocht faic mo éiríde de n-a tumaíocht féin sa muir  
A oirídeanna ! ná solus pásad mo lampa ar  
An bpáipéar bpolam tá dá éosaíocht tré beirí bán  
Ná fós an bean ós úr a oileas a ndoirídeanna.  
Inteóíocht róim ! a galtáin ag luascadh do gléas crann,  
Tóg t'ancoire, téigeads go tír go mbíonn saol eile ann !  
Dá uaigníocht mo éas de bárr an dócais dúir  
Creidim fós i mbeannaíocht déanaíocht na gciarrsúir !  
Meallfaíocht na crainn an anfa b'féiríocht nac bfuil i ndán  
Dóiríocht ac lúbad sior ós cionn long briste ar pán  
San inis éiríocht, san éiríocht, san éiríocht dár sáibail . . .  
Éist fós, a éiríde, tá rann ag muiríocht dá gabáil !

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

Dá amráin aistriúcht o'n bfraincís le D. O'Duibneim.

# LETTER OF THE MONTH

## THE RIDDLE OF THE MUD

THROUGH all the tiresome -ations and -isms, you can see, if you live in the country, always providing that you have eyes to see, the daily round in farm and field go forward unimproved from the worker's viewpoint; untouched, save in a few instances, by change. It's true that now there is a thresher to be hired in the autumn by those who can afford it, but in spring, the period of toughest labour, it doesn't look as though the small man—that is, the average Irish landsman—had yet got around to the hiring of a communal tractor for the ploughing.

As I write, with a stub of pencil on a vibrating knee, I see below me in a field a man behind a pair of horses—one white, one brown—cutting a long symmetrical furrow through the reluctant soil which, in colour closer to purple than to brown, seems to fan out from behind the ploughshare under the patient team. They were there before I climbed this hill to see them better, and after I have gone in to the comfort of the spread table and the spread book they will be there, for the field is long and wide and to-morrow's task depends for its beginning on the finishing of to-day's.

It is a late season. An unkind March has kept the farmer back ("behind schedule" oughtn't one to say?) with unseasonable snowstorms and sodden, unworkable clay. The evenings are as yet all too short for folk who have a whole month to catch up. So, although the wind is cold, the soil obstinate, the way of the furrow long, that weary team down there cannot cut the job in half. There is no shelf to fit half a field. They must carry on.

In the wake of the horses, seagulls and crows quarrel in friendly fashion for the wire-worms. In the lambent April sunlight they make that very "silent music" that Ledwidge heard. I, too, hear it, but the farmer does not. He is too busy. Over the rise of ploughed earth which forms one end of the field, the gable of a farmhouse shows, shining white like the gulls, set in a circle of bare trees which look, just now, black like the crows, . . . Beauty. Beauty's very self . . . But it is only for the watcher, the idler. To that preoccupied man down there it does not exist.

And when, at last, the job is ended and darkness is settling over the land, I know that those tired horses will rattle across the yard outside that house up there; and that thick oozing mud from the weary plougher's boots will be carried over the



clean stone floor of the kitchen ; and that somebody will swob it up ; and that pretty soon it will be there again. For there is no way out of that. At least there seems to be no way out of it, or else nobody cares enough about the problem to try and solve it, the swobbers of stone floors being notoriously, if one may say it, unimportant.

Now, if you have eyes, and friends who work the land, you cannot live long in the country without realising that, while in other branches of industry (and no industry compares with this one) and of creative work (landspeople are creative workers), life has been brightened, labour eased and shortened, on the farms things go on in pretty much the same old sloppy back-breaking, monotonous way as they have for generations—even for centuries. It's fashionable (it always was, likely) to say they are themselves to blame. Why don't they waken up and modernise their methods? Why don't they buy improvements as they come along? Wear oilskins in wet weather, and not make onlookers, whizzing by in cars, feel uncomfortable all over and obscurely guilty in the heredity-cells? You can shut up, if you like, the "growling" landswoman or landsman by coming this stuff at them, for in our comfortable capitalist economy people will admit anything rather than admit an insufficiency of money. But fancy the feelings of a six-to-ten-acre farmer on hearing this, when he has just paid over the residue of the beet cheque for a bicycle to take his little daughter in to the town Convent, in order that she may learn something which will take her away, for ever, from him and the drudgery which is breaking his back and his heart.

They live, in our community, a life within a life. They bear the brunt of wars and are left out of the sharing of spoils. They do more work for less money than any other group and are expected to apologise for it. Any attempt at expression of their natural dissatisfaction is met by a knowing smile. The farmers, bless them, are growing again. Don't mind them and pass the salt. Clerics, leaning over plush-edged pulpits, admonish them to be contented with their lot. White-handed ex-comrades in politics and the professions assure them that they live the ONE life, that they have the ONE job that's worth all the others put together, working as they do, for no boss, in their own time and in a security that nobody else knows. There's the land, old-timer, no fear you'll wake up one morning and find it's shifted ! (Oh, but isn't there?) The one Irish writer who, more than others, has sought to express for him the feelings and frustrations of the small farmer and peasant has been skilfully outlawed,

conveniently anathematised, so that his trenchant truths are neutralised if not nullified, before they are uttered.

Oh, yes, they are eloquent—the white-handed ones. They talk them silent, but they don't talk them round. The landspeople know their own know. They nod mechanically and wait for they know not what. Meantime they splash in and out across the sloppy yards, loving comfort as much as anybody else; straightening houses that won't stay straight, watching other people drive shiny cars, wearing nice clothes, and "earning" (but not as they understand earning) bigger money. And they know, dimly, that something, somewhere, has gone astray. Someone has blundered, and they are the casualties.

They think and think, but they never quite make it out. How can they? Even the whole-time thinkers—the clerics, the politicians, the trained economists—don't seem able to make it out either. But these latter aren't fretting overmuch at the delay in arriving at the solution. Delay suits them. It's the others who are fretting as they go from end to end of life without earning that most precious of all labour's rewards—leisure. Time to stand and stare.

It isn't fair. If one group slacks, another group has got to pay with double work; just as someone must pay with insufficiency of funds for over-stocking at the other end, for double-jobbing and general over-lapping in the more elegant stratifications.

It is easy to think that because the landspeople sing dumb they don't care. They do care. Anyone who knows them even passably well can tell that, whatever their political theories, their party biases, all landspeople are chronically angry. Every intelligent, overworked (it's the same thing) woman or man I have spoken to on the land has had within her, or within him, a sort of smothered fire, a banked-down fury. Even those who love the land rear their children with the hope of getting them away from it. It ought to be a good life but it isn't.

Unity would give them power, but they won't be united. The fact is that their unity would be so dangerous to the lily-handed interests that, apart from reasons for disunity inherent in their group, it is hardly fantastic to suppose that subtle methods are employed to keep them apart. The most cogent of the inherent reasons is the fact that, owing to the unremitting nature of their work, landspeople have not leisure for weighing pros and cons. As well expect the farmer to stop in the middle of his ploughing to admire the landscape, as to spare time for the conundrums and jig-saw puzzles of present political issues.

So, more than any other group, the people of the land depend on the integrity of those whom they pay, literally, to do their thinking for them ; and, inevitably, they have been more let down than any other group by those who, many of them, having graduated from their midst, have when once out of the mire been only too glad to forget the unpleasant and disturbing details of the hard lives they have left behind them.

They raise for us, in the sweat of *their* brows, the good food we buy with our easier money and eat and take for granted. But if the inevitable and justifiable exodus from the land keeps on growing, if the factories and the professions and the political "avenues" keep on filling up as they do, then it may well be that the landspeople, all unmeaning, will have their revenge on our selfish lack of thought. For there will be no more grain, no more butter, no more meat, and in the end, the high-hatting, superior philosophers may have to take a hand and so find an invaluable opportunity of confirming their own theories that hard, dirty and unremitting work on the land really is the very best job of all—for the other fellow.

GARRETT O'DRISCOLL



# ART

## ROYAL HIBERNIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS

We can take it that the Academy exhibition contains the best Ireland can do in the fine arts. Other institutions may be more selective after a particular bias, but the Academy contains even the most extreme of our rebels. Here, then, is the starting point for the critic of Irish art in this year of grace; the answer to the really relevant questions about the art of a particular place and time: How does it reflect the spirit of that society which gave it birth? How valid are the artists as interpreters of that spirit? Are they indigenous or exotic? But our critics are rarely concerned with such questions. Art is, for them, a kind of esoteric industry for the production of intelligible pictures. But art is something more than this, any art, painting, music, literature, is at once the medium and the expression of a people striving towards perfection. The sincere artist, at a particular time, is as surely determined in his course by the conditions of that time, as the citizen is controlled by its laws.

To judge from this exhibition there is a grave disparity between our life and our art. As far as I see it has sequestered itself away from life—seeks to remain and be judged in a compartment of its own. There is here neither that esoteric function of art that gives character to the things of use; not do our painters or sculptors reflect any focal point in the strife upwards towards perfection. It may be that there is no impulse towards perfection, that we are in a state of spiritual inertia, as I believe we are. Then our art, which should be an expression of the spirit, at least of its creators, should be a continual protest, manifest a profound discontent, seek to destroy what stands between it and that humus which the sincere artist will always subconsciously crave: a spiritually healthy community. But does it?

This is a time of unrest for Europe, for us in so far as we are European. No amount of race-consciousness will take us outside Europe. And all through Europe, mind, heart and spirit is attempting something, questioning the premises on which our civilisation is based. Everywhere it is so with art, this smashing of clichés, this discontent with religion that has become a surface formalism and does not go deep enough to contradict the powerful materialist forces that must end by creating the engines of their own destruction. Or will we claim to be healthier than Europe, because we still have the Faith? Have we not also the religion of materialism informing our economics, our politics, our working concept of social justice.

Here, in the bulk of the work, is that smug self satisfaction that is inevitable in a society controlled by money. In that our art reflects our society. But it is only an art dead and moribund that will reflect unhealthiness, that will not protest. But here is just well-bred self-satisfaction, or, perhaps, not altogether so well bred, not aristocratic but bourgeois. There is nothing alive in the bulk of this painting—pretty, sentimental pictures, a good deal of urbane beauty, pictures that cry out to be counted for "garniture and household stuff."

Strange that a Catholic country has no religious art worth counting. Here there is only one piece of work that has any relation to the religion of the people, a bronze head: "Prayer," by Séamus Murphy. This has strength and honesty, a Gothic simplicity about it. This artist has done some fine work in limestone: a St. Finnbarr, now surmounting the gable of the Aula Maxima, University College, Cork, and two statues for the facade of Bantry Church. His "Deirdre," also in bronze, is less formalised, but has the same strong uncompromising, healthy quality in its realism. Perhaps the cheapness of Italian plaster-casts and their greater recognisability as objects of devotion, our passion for terrazzo, imitation Baroque altar pieces in white marble, is, in some measure, responsible for the absence of religious art in Ireland. Bourgeois again. Listen to what Paul Claudel has to say on the subject:

"It is by taking our stand in front of Nature in an attitude of superior and disdainful criticism, by submitting her by authority of the Academy to our ridiculous theories, by cooking her according to the noble palate, which generally is only middle-class taste, by compelling her to play the harlot, by gainsaying and falsifying all that sacred candid word which her Author has put in her mouth, that from degradation to degradation we find ourselves surrounded by those sickening productions with which Italian marble-masons and patentee manufacturers have filled our poor churches."

The critic looking for signs of life will find Seán Keating. For many years now he has been a philosopher in paint, thinking, perhaps too much, but somehow getting his thought across. See "Deifir don Bainis," the wild ballet movement, the histrionic verve of his people, their excitement, the colour they make; behind them a turbulent and immense sky; around them primæval rock and before them the church grown out of the rock and weathered with it. Its crumbling gable has only the bare imprint of man's hand on it, which it will soon lose and again become formless, as man determines form. Keating's peasants are always protesting. I am tempted to think that in the painting of this picture, he is expressing an amazement at the courage in people for life—that they dare such personal importance in the face of nature. "Daoine Simplidhe," as becomes a family, has dignity, but here, too, the cloud background symbolises an immense and irrational movement that threatens. "Fadó" belongs, I think, to an earlier and less philosophical period in Keating's growth. The painting is more finished, as though it were an end in itself; the picture has masterly qualities as decoration and design. The histrionic is here, too. I must not leave without telling of a haughty Moorish head in crayon, strongly and surely drawn, which he calls "Non-Nordic Type."

Harry Kernoff is of the city. Also he grows more urbane without losing any of his individual qualities. His best pictures here are, to my mind, "Place du Tertre" and "Sunday Evening, Place du Combat, Paris." He is primarily interested in things and in a particularly static aspect of things, which gives his work a peculiar rigidity. His people are introduced after a formula. He

sees clearly and believes only in what he sees—a kind of agnostic in painting. His work is valuable for itself and, furthermore, as a counterblast to the superficial romanticism of so many “travelled” pictures that adorn the Academy walls.

To me there is something strange in the popularity of Jack B. Yeats' later work, due mainly to my distrust of public taste in Ireland. I wonder if many of the patrons are not impressed by the commercial value the artist, justly, amid all this cut-throat business of life, puts on his pictures. I think there is greatness in these pictures of form synthesising out of vivid lights. Man is not there represented, except as part of the general movement. I see an attempt here to paint pure atmosphere, and there is nothing vague or tenuous about the result. Perhaps he is doing emotionally what the surrealists tried to do scientifically, by synthesis where they tried analysis. There is an essential richness in his “A Morning in a City.” “An Evening in Spring” is colder, wrought of purer light, has less mystery in the subject. The contrast between these two betrays control in a painting that has the seemingly accidental quality of shapes seen in the fire, or in running water. Two smaller pictures, “Boy and Horse,” “Dancing on the Deck,” are fresh and lovely.

Maurice MacGonigal is another painter who demands attention. There is some fine painting in “Davy Byrne's,” though the types painted have no association with this “pub” in the literary history of Dublin. The still-life in the background is superbly done. “The Servant Girl” is one of the most brilliant and uneven pictures in the Academy. Here, too, the still-life in the foreground is painted with verve and sureness. But, to me, there is a lack of harmony, and a psychological discordance in the picture as a whole, in spite of the masterly painting. MacGonigal is a powerful and sincere worker, and that, perhaps, is why his pictures are not so “perfect.” He might lead a “protestant” movement.

Apart from the foregoing the bulk of the Academy painting is conservative. First here, comes Leo Whelan, with his superb craftsmanship, his perfect finish, his suavity. He is a painter of “Society,” guaranteed to make his sitter look as he (the sitter) would like his descendants to think he looked. If it is one of the functions of art to make life seem what it is not, then this is great art. Most noteworthy are the portraits of Mrs. Abrahamson and of The Most Rev. Dr. Keogh.

Seán O'Sullivan as a portrait painter is more adventurous—and, therefore, not so sure. Still, the adventurer has sometimes the greater success, and has here—with the portrait of Miss Miriam Leonard, a picture courageously painted. The flesh tones are delicate but bold enough to survive the brilliant blues of the drapery.

Lady Glenavy's harmonious fantasies are exceedingly pleasant, and, to my mind, her qualities as a painter are eminently suited to the painting of murals. Best of them here is “On the Rocks.”



Of single works I should like to mention "Alice," by B. Fleetwood Walker, a delightful study of the head of a young girl painted with clarity and finish. I like it for its spontaneity.

This does not pretend to be at all an adequate survey of the Academy exhibits. Only broader issues have been dealt with, and these cursorily. In Ireland we need critical standards that do not begin with the assumption that we have already realised the be-all and the end-all in this art. Art abroad, less in England than in France and Germany, has come through a whirlwind of experiments and vogues that have left us untouched. Even though these experiments are now dead, European art will have the fruit of them. Nor are these experiments isolated phenomena; they are related to changes in spirit; they are related to the soul of society. At worst they were sins, as sin is sign of imperfection. But even sin is a sign of life. A strong spirit will express itself in art, one way or the other; at a time of health by creation, by positive expression that creates new forms, new harmonies, a new realisation of life; in a time of ill-health, when spiritual values determine least the structure of society, by expressed discontent, disintegration, destruction. A live art goes one way or the other. An academic art produces a wealth of irrelevant forms.

EDWARD SHEEHY

*(My trespass here is due to the temporary absence from town  
of Mr. John Dowling.—E. S.)*

## MUSIC

### FEIS ÁTHA CLIATH

Feis Átha Cliath 1937 has come and gone, and, in spite of all the ills we are heir to in Ireland, come and gone successfully. The resuscitation of this Feis from comparative insignificance to the lusty young growth of the last few years is a matter that might be profitably examined upon a wider basis than could be attempted here. No matter how cynical a view be taken of this resuscitation it must be admitted that the enthusiasm informing both participants and promoters is but the outward manifestation of inner urges the importance of which it would be foolish to underrate.

Those of us who have been interested in Feis Átha Cliath have been concerned with what might be called its growing pains and have been rather nervous, sometimes, of the outcome. One would like to say that these pains have now been outgrown, but, as far as can be seen, the most serious attacks have yet to come, and, as prevention is better than cure, an examination of the weaknesses of the last Feis, the trends apparent, and the problems that may beset proper expansion in coming years, such examination may be the best service that could be done the Feis. As some of these matters have a more than particular and local application, being intimately associated with the work of re-habilitating Gaelic culture, for this reason they may be more interesting to the general reader. There are, naturally, many facets of the cultural work done by the Feis with which I am not competent to deal; I am concerned here only with matters musical and their complementaries.

As a general criticism, I would like first to say that I think the Feis is too closely bound up with the schools; which is not to say that I would have the schools less tightly bound into the Feis, but, that there seems to be a pre-occupation with schools and scholastic needs on the part of the promoters and that such pre-occupation tends to limit the radius of cultural activity. An examination of the Feis programme will show that some ninety per cent. of the competitions listed cater directly or indirectly for the schools. I am not quarreling with the amount of attention devoted this extremely important service but with the proportion of attention allotted, which, I should say, is thirty per cent. excessive. In other words, to preserve a proper balance between component parts and to ensure the accomplishment of its cultural aims, a further thirty per cent. expansion is necessary in the Feis programme—at least thirty per cent., and it is in the compassing of this necessary expansion that I see the greatest dangers to the continued healthy life of the Feis. If such expansion be not undertaken and planned for, I am afraid that nothing can prevent the Feis sliding back into obscurity—musical obscurity, at any rate.

To the musician, remembering other Feiseanna and musical festivals, the most striking thing about Feis Átha Cliath is the absence of piano playing. I have thanked devoutly whatever powers there be for this dispensation—

there is hardly any music tone in the world quite so insipid, so irritating, as piano tone, with its eternal percussion—but, somebody has somewhere written that the piano is the “poor man’s orchestra”—and written better sense than he knew, perhaps. Though there have been many other influences, it can be said that the root of modern orchestral music is the keyboard instrument; round it as a nucleus, too, has grown a great chamber music. And because of this, and as the first step towards the necessary expansion, I would like to see the introduction into the Feis programme of piano competitions for both solo and concerted work—not for the sake of the instrument itself, but because of the importance of the keyboard to young students who may one day be composers. For it is only at the keyboard that the student can make of the stuff of harmony his daily fare, can approach concerted and orchestral contacts through the medium of personal solo performance, and if our old music is ever to blossom again, as have, say, our old legends, it will be through concerted vehicles only, through orchestras and their subsidiaries and through choirs that the blossoming shall proceed to its maturity. And the maturity is the thing we wait, the thing we desire.

It is easy to point out the line of expansion, fatally easy, but not so easy to say where the music is to come from to permit of such expansion. (It is interesting to note this Feis, a purely cultural movement, relying more and more upon the art world for the supply of the material essential to functioning.) And this is the most serious danger, as I see it, confronting Feiseanna of the type Feis Átha Cliath, that it should be faced with choosing one of two impossible alternatives—to persevere in its aim of re-habilitating Gaelic music and die of mal-nutrition, a chronic shortage of suitable supply, or, fare forth into the world of cosmopolitan music and surrender its aim. With the continued yearly improvement in technical equipment on the part of competitors comes the approach of this dilemma.

I thought this aspect of the matter particularly evident listening to the choirs this year. The standard of performance has progressed in an amazing way, and within a few years, it can be safely said music of certain sufficient difficulty must be found to test this newly acquired technique. And certainly, it will be only art music that will supply this need, music, probably, with some sort of formal basis, and, if the content of the music is to share the prevailing thought-orientation of the Feis, such music can be made only in Ireland and by Irish brains. Will adequate supplies be there to meet the demand? It is extremely doubtful. Whatever hope there has been of getting the necessary music for the functioning of choirs, once instrumental competitions are introduced the shortage of suitable music becomes acute. How much Irish music is there on the market suitable for testing senior students—piano, violin or ‘cello soloists? And when we leave the domain of the soloist and enter the region of concerted work is not the position infinitely worse—if such were possible? Even at present, without considering any of the above expansions, the greatest difficulty is experienced in procuring suitable music for one small



orchestral competition. The writing of the necessary music, even if achieved, is a solution of but half the problem, for, on the heels of the achievement comes the question of publication for an extremely limited market—or, if not publication, cheap duplication of parts, at any rate. If Feiseanna are to function successfully some solution of these matters must be found.

However, there are some expansions in form and matter taking place quietly within the Feis, which make more pleasant contemplation and are, to me, at any rate, very interesting. When I heard the matter of "action-songs" mentioned some years ago, I was extremely sceptical as to the value of these (having, too, some humiliating recollections of indiscretions in this genre; to which I was compelled when an exceedingly small infant). I now see my limited vision in this matter, for these action-songs are rapidly moving towards crystallization into art forms—one that I saw in the direction of Ballet and another, of all things, in the direction of Opera. The first was a washing-day mime and ballet sequence performed with immense gravity by some small girls, all action being carefully plotted to music. A most ingenious and charming scheme and performance. The second was a performance of the "Croppy Boy" with narration by an invisible chorus of boys' voices, the dramatis personae playing their small parts on operatic lines. One can only hope that these first fruits shall be encouraged to further growth.

As a pendant to this development I would like to see included in the Feis a competition dealing with the presentation of Irish dancing. The present method of having the dancer walk on to the stage, wait for his music cue, and then commence dancing leaves much to be desired, and the construction of vehicles—miming sequences, short scenas, musical or dramatic—is long overdue. Some effort should be made to force along development towards stylistic presentation.

I would like, too, the inclusion of competitions for speech-choirs. The art of beautiful speaking, which, to say the least of it, is just as important as the art of beautiful singing, has been much neglected in Ireland. I have not the space at my disposal to deal with the relationship between speech (of the type envisaged) and music, but I would refer anybody interested in the matter to the early "Abbey" experiments by Yeats, and Miss Florence Farr. Even if one does not quite agree with the solutions to the various problems reached by these experiments, yet, something was achieved.

What I have written is mainly a plea for effort to intensify the trend towards the stylistic presentation of concerted work. This is the trend mainly noticeable in the Feis and from all points of view it is most desirable. The preservation and presentation of Gaelic musical culture has been for years in the hands of soloists and the result of their custodianship has been disastrous. Perhaps the new interest in concerted work is the herald of better things: it has not been born a day too soon.

I have heard a rumour that the Government intend erecting a theatre in Dublin for the purposes of Gaelic drama—a theatre to seat about four hundred people. I suppose we will never be free from the congenital idiocy of government departments, but one would welcome an outbreak of sanity in this matter. All Gaelic cultural activity—in fact all cultural activity, in Dublin, is hampered by the absence of suitable accommodation, and, knowing this need, responsible government officials apparently are unable to think in terms any more spacious than those associated with large hay lofts. The space at my disposal allows this note only and this protest. EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

### **CELEBRITY CONCERT, THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN : HEIFETZ**

Knowing Heifetz, the virtuoso, I went to this recital with little enthusiasm, but some curiosity as to what the technician would make of a Mozart Divertimento-Allegro and the early Beethoven sonata in E flat. The result was the unexpected; Heifetz has grown up and become a great artist. In these numbers all his great technical equipment was placed at the service of the music; and, with artistic sincerity, added to this flawless technique, the result was a joy. Of course we had the old Heifetz in Wieniawski's second Concerto; but, having had a meal, we were willing to trifle with dessert. The violinist used a steel E string, which was a pity, as tonal elegance would have left us without any complaint. Do violinists not hear the "common" quality of steel-string tone? Emanuel Bay collaborated handsomely at the piano.

### **DUBLIN OPERATIC SOCIETY, GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN**

The operas produced for this season were three—*La Traviata*, *Madam Butterfly* and *Mignon*. This society has built up a certain reputation for the quality of its productions and has its reward in the public patronage bestowed upon it. The Gaiety Theatre was filled for every performance, even for the matinee. The honours of the week go to the ladies—Elena Danielli and May Devitt with special mention of Patricia Black's Suzuki in *Butterfly*. Heddle Nash, the guest tenor, suffered from throat trouble, unfortunately, during the week. One can say that the only nearly adequate performances of Grand Opera that we get in Dublin are those of this society. For principal roles it engages guest artists of distinction, filling up smaller parts with deserving members from its own ranks. (The experience thus gained is truly invaluable). It has a formidable and competent chorus of seventy voices—the sheer weight of tone in the ensembles was a pleasure—and it engages an orchestra of forty or thereabouts for its productions. Such presentation is beyond the resources of the usual travelling operatic company.

The society has produced *La Traviata* and *Butterfly* before. The new production this season was Thomas' *Mignon*. I do not know that musically it was worth reviving, but certainly it supplied a fine vehicle for May Devitt. Her notation and pitch are always accurate and her voice has quality. lacks that edginess often developed by operatic sopranis. Special mention must be made of Leslie Jones' *Ministrel*, particularly in the last act, where from the

Berceuse onwards he galvanized the thread-bare story into something very like life. Lieutenant Doyle was the conductor. He was not to be envied his heavy task—the band being obviously unfamiliar with the work. Many times on the opening night he had to pull the performance “out of the fire” and that he succeeded is a tribute to him. A newcomer, Gertrude Costigan, was the Mignon.

It is to be regretted that the season was so short, as obviously the performances were beginning to knit together properly towards the end of the week. This was particularly noticeable in the orchestral work. (I heard Saturday afternoon's *Butterfly* and the orchestra had improved fifty per cent. on its earlier performance. I should say that this performance of *Butterfly*—particularly Acts two and three—was the best I have seen in Dublin). Mr. Arthur Hammond was the conductor for *Butterfly* and *Traviata*. It was good to hear the orchestral work in the latter opera played as something more important than a mere strumming accompaniment.

The production, dressing and lighting were a pleasure and the society must be complimented on worthily maintaining the high standard set by previous productions.

#### **SYMPHONY CONCERT, GAIETY THEATRE : FIRST OF SERIES**

IRISH RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Conductor, Adrian Boult.

This was the first concert of a series planned for cultural purposes by the Director of Broadcasting. One was glad of the opportunity of hearing this orchestra away from the influence of the studios. (An official friend referred to them recently as “The Garrets”—but then he is noted for his politeness). Judged by this performance the orchestra is much better than one would think hearing only its studio broadcasts. There are hardly enough strings for public performance—treble or bass. Three contra-bassi are not sufficient for an orchestra of this size. Wood-wind and brass playing were good—there were, of course, a few flaws, due mainly to insufficient acquaintance with the works being played. Treble string tone is hard, somewhat edgy and lacking in suave sweep. The cello line, however, made some amends in this latter matter by a noble suavity in the second subject of the first movement of the Brahms' *Symphony in D*. If the treble strings played like this . . .

Whoever chose the programme for this concert has a somewhat flattering estimate of the state of musical culture in Dublin. The main items were the Brahms *Symphony No. 2* and the Elgar 'cello Concerto (soloist, Thelma Reiss). The suggestion to me was that if Dublin is to learn its musical alphabet it had better learn it from the other end. The performance of the symphony was fairly adequate. Most of the minor detail was missing, but the main lines of the work were firmly drawn. The orchestral work in the Concerto was good; the conductor deserves special praise for this—for it is a “perilous” work from this point of view. The soloist's performance was excellent. Miss Renee Flynn was the soprano. I enjoyed her Haydn number; but I thought both other songs unsuited to her style and the quality of her voice.



The Director of Broadcasting is to be complimented upon this new cultural scheme ; but I do hope that programmes will be planned—that these concerts will not be just a collection of music flung haphazardly at the people. The very last ounce of effect should be extracted from the series. The audience was large—so large that I am in doubt as to whether the occasion was a musical or social one. I devoutly hope it was the former.

EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

### BROADCAST CONCERT FROM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, CORK

Mr. Fleischmann's orchestra gave their best broadcast so far on 14 April. While the brass and woodwind are still rather rough and ready, the strings now play with an assurance and a quality of tone that might be studied with advantage by other orchestras in the country.

The opening Allegro of the Bach Concerto for three pianos and orchestra—an original choice, this—went somewhat roughly and the louder passages were lacking in precision, though the piano parts were good. The Radio may have to take some of the blame for the uneven quality noticed in this movement, as several forte parts throughout the concert came over rather blurred, and with an exaggerated bass. The second movement, the very stuff of Bach with its atmosphere of peaceful gladness, was well treated by soloists and orchestra alike. The strings were effective in this beautiful music. The niceties of the last movement were fairly well brought out, but the Conductor seemed to take it in too athletic a fashion.

Of the three fine old Italian airs chosen by Countess Tomacelli, Paesiello's "Che vuol la zingarella" was the most enjoyable. The other songs, though not open to carping from a strictly technical standpoint, were not given with quite sufficient feeling. The orchestration of the songs by Muiris O Rónáin showed a high degree of taste and skill.

Mr. Brady gave a fine account of himself generally in the Bruch violin concerto. On a few occasions, however, his playing sounded rather thin, and his intonation was not at all times above reproach. He was very good in the second movement, which he played with much feeling. This Concerto of Bruch's is an uneven work. It is a perfect subject for the occasionally beneficial crime of chopping up a work of art. Performed without the tiresome first movement it would be decidedly better. Unfortunately, one looks in vain for a sufficiently brazen conductor.

The most stimulating work heard at this concert was E. J. Moeran's "Farrago" Suite. This witty and adroitly scored piece is quite a miniature *tour de force*. The light touch of the Rigadoon was a relief after the plaints of the romantic Bruch. The playing was creditable.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Fleischmann will give more frequent concerts next season, as regular performances are essential if a good permanent orchestra is to exist in the South (or anywhere else).

J. C. NAGLE

# THEATRE

## CLASSIC AND CLASSWAR

With the exception of Shakespeare's *As You Like It* every show this month had a social bias. Thus in *Quin's Secret*, at the Abbey, George Sheils revealed an advance on the social awareness of his *The Jailbird*, his latest play having for background the struggle for work in a Northern town and the revolt of youth against the crippling effects of a poverty forced on it by the "sasstem." This revolt was starkly developed and presented in its logical outcome in Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*, presented by the New Theatre Group, dealing with a taximen's strike in New York and using modern audience-participation and cross-cutting of vignette scenes with admirable effect, passionate sincerity and humanity completing its appeal to the spectators' sensibilities. It was Toller's *Masses and Man* localised and developed in technique but lacked, naturally enough, that sense of tradition which infused every line of Toller's play with real delicacy of feeling. Again the Abbey Experimental Theatre presented Mervyn Wall's *Alarm Amongst the Clerks*, which states the blackcoat worker's reaction from the stifling air of office life, shrivelling him by its futility into an adding-machine and ruling him by the elemental need of a job to keep alive. The revolt, dramatised in a finely conceived dream sequence as the murder of his boss by the hero because he "knows nothing else to do" is, of course, futile. The author, Ibsenwise, is content to state the problem and "arouse thought"—the obvious futility of his climax serving to drive home the helplessness of those depicted. It was in several respects the best play of the month. Arthur Duff's *Cadenza in Black* was a lanternslide lecture on the habits of middleclass man in his castle home; extremely natural, quietly witty and smooth in style but with jerky action, too many characters being merely cogs in the machine. Some really sensitive acting and balanced production saved it from being a flop, the quality and depth revealed in certain sections, notably in Act 2, and the neat use of clichés to damn the characters out of their own mouths, so to speak, revealed undoubted possibilities in the author. But the play is no more than an outburst, a weary plaint by a dreary class. All the little ineptitudes and futilities of aspiring suburbia were depicted with almost heartless clarity, but the author then just gave them up.

It is this giving up in helpless surrender, this adoption of present-day society as an inescapable norm that I think vitiates much modern writing. Why stir up these people and point to their bitter lot when they are not shown a better 'ole to go to? It is no use saying there is not one. Granting the use of exposure of our weaknesses and the value of awakening apathy to action, our critics, instructors, and sympathisers all fail to be more than skindeep to advocate a philosophy, a policy which will remedy the present muddle. A definite line of action, fully realistic, is wanted, not large hearted sentiments nor even *saeva indignatio*. Which reminds me that Swift would be a good man to have nowadays.

The middle-class and proletarian problem is a modern thing, the outcome of the rise of the post-Renaissance trader class to power, culminating in the Servile State of the Industrial Revolution around 1800. Where social valuation depends on one's money, where mere existence depends on a "safe" job, where fine feelings wither in backyards overlooked by neighbours, where slogans, carchwords and shibboleths are mouthed as "thought," so that democracy consists in a level waste of yes-men, in fact, wherever one lives in this or any other "civilised" country, one sees the inevitable outcome of this money-taint in society, this departure from the old Catholic ideal of individual independence through ownership and social co-operation. That ideal is the real basis, the rock bottom of the European tradition on which the ricketty jerry-buildings of modern society are reared. Any social propaganda of real worth, whether dealing with the working-class or middle-class, must be based on that ideal, must echo it constantly and by immediate contrast reveal present-day conventions of society, not as a normal state of things, the twisting of which, as the bourgeois thinks, deprives him of the bovine bliss of Edwardian days nor yet as something higher than the slum to be aspired to for the "uplift of the masses," as the Left basically assumes. Our whole society is a slum, mentally if not physically, and Odets, Duff and Sheils alike fail to look beyond it and to reveal any sense of tradition, of background.

If each of their grievances were settled to-morrow and their pet Utopias of pleasant work and good pay, leisure, "romance" and fashionable clothes were all available, their societies would be no better off because they ask for no more than just these trivial things of the immediate moment, a mere sequence of sensual satisfactions. There is something more to humanity than this, a spiritual capacity for sacrifice which such writers either ignore, dismiss as irrational or distort into vague humanitarian impulses, whims of self-pity or just clumsy good nature. In all this, they speak for a widespread mentality. "Instinct" is the high-sign, nowadays, and satisfaction of it our only purpose. We, the civilised, are no more than beasts. Is it matter for wonder, then, that true Catholicism, here at least, is stifled and bowdlerised to such a "safe" degree, so that there shall be no clash with the social codes, that it has become a byword for all that is blundering and reactionary and that such as become socially conscious too often lose the Faith through the blindness of the orthodox and the confused thinking of all concerned. Yet only through the Faith, consistently applied in our social structure and permeating the whole thought-system of the nation, can true reform come.

*Alarm Amongst the Clerks* alone amongst these first productions revealed any consciousness of such a background or any desire to return to it and develop from it, and the fact that a class has arisen educated to believe itself "the heir of all the ages" and unable through wage slavery to acquire or use its birthright, is the main theme of the play. As a result, it has a depth, a roundness of outlook lacking in the others; and this, coupled with genuine imagination and dramatic skill, combined to make it an intensely moving play. Having



already read it, I was prepared for this and was glad to see much of it achieved in production. By no means all however, and the producer, Cecil Ford, made his greatest mistake and, indeed, the only one of importance, in miscasting, four of the parts being variously out of key.

Brian Carey clowned through his part as Finn, thereby ruining the first act, which is almost entirely built up of reactions by the others to his naive, as yet unfaded personality. The second act suffered from his ebullience too, but, in addition, was weakened by overacting of drunkenness by both Frank Carney as Selskar and Malachi Keegan as Mullin. Both actors, through excess of zeal, threw away whole speeches here of vital worth and propaganda-value. Prim, finicky Mr. Doody became a pure type, thinking in jerks instead of precise formulae, and this from a player who gave a sensitive performance in *Vigil*, some time ago, in a much smaller part. At the same time, John McDarbey's rendering of this part revealed an underlying capacity for sympathy, which more forceful direction might have developed. Selskar, the hero, and bitter reality-aware clerk, was earnestly handled by Frank Carney, his rendering of the dream sequence being especially good, but he suffered from the physical handicap of a metallic, rigid voice, whose only variation is in volume, never in tone. In general, movement and gesture were excellent, and a feature I liked particularly was the finished pointing of all speeches. Much of this good work, however, was nullified by a general lack of feel for tempo and rhythm in teamplay, which killed several climaxes, especially in Act 2, where Ireton's entrance, for instance, was badly let down by those on stage. Incidentally, Austin Meldon's rendering of this part is his third disappointment to date. I still believe he is capable of better work than this, lacking as it was in solidity and inner poise. Ireton should be calm, cold, a dominant personality even in silence—as it is, it is the only character rather thinly drawn, one of the few weaknesses in the play, for it always weakens an argument to set up a lay-figure for an opponent.

Praise, unqualified, is due to four players all equally good: Anne Potter as Miss Noone, and Shela Ward as Miss Boyd, both sensitive and spontaneous performances, carrying that richness that the evolving of a character out of one's personality always gives; Ml. Kinsella as Harkin, a first appearance of merit and assurance; and G. O hIeadha (who also designed the sets) as Fox, the room-boss, just the right blend of cool efficiency and masked feeling. The sets for this and the curtain-raiser, *The Phoenix*, were excellently lit, and well-finished unobtrusive backgrounds, but the usual Abbey mannerism of an entrance into a broken corner, the set being permanent for both plays, and lack of sensitiveness for scale and its dramatic possibilities resulted in little originality of design, the semi-expressionistic last act—which relies for effect purely on *staging*, not speech, as was attempted here, the lines themselves clashing with such a treatment—being poorly served in consequence. Permanency of set leads, of course, to economy of labour and materials, important points for a group “doing it all ourselves” from production to scenemaking and

business management, thereby following the lead set over two years ago by the Dublin Little Theatre Guild and, later, the Birr Little Theatre, the Stage Society being the latest venture. Our amateurs are beginning to realize there is more in the theatre than just behaving nicely on the night. Not that "amateurs" correctly describes most of the players here, and it is significant that all those at fault had already appeared several times on the Abbey stage and elsewhere, often in major roles. What endangered this show was the famous Abbey "teamspirit," which nowadays consists not in co-ordination but in equal opportunity for holding the stage in solo after solo. Hence a lack of orchestration and rhythm which the producer failed to remedy. However, the show is well worth seeing when it is revived this month.

I have already dealt with the content and style of the other plays cited. It remains merely to mention points of note. Peter Powell, producer and scene-designer at the Gate, gave us an *As You Like It* like the proverbial *Hamlet*, minus hero and heroine, yet a lovely show for all that, due both to Lord Longford's lovely and colourful costume designs and to an excellent supporting cast, prominent in which was Blake Gifford as de Boise, a piece of acting which was almost pure ballet—lovely! Cathleen Delaney revealed a character-sense both here and in *Cadenza in Black*, which was only equalled by Robert Bett's gorgeous clowning as William and his excellent creation of Mortimer out of nothing in Arthur Duff's play. This actor is a genuine acquisition. Hamlyn Benson's Amiens was excellently sung, and his Sam Turnbull the best thing he has done yet. John Stephenson made a fine picture of Jacques, and in his "all the world's a stage" speech had his audience where he wanted it. That all too rare thrill of intense silence, the real magic of the theatre, lived for me for the first time in two years, I am sure. Even good plays and good actors do not always achieve this tribute, and it was well deserved this time. *Cadenza in Black* was notable for his finished and sympathetic portrayal of Mr. Weldon (his "Yes . . . yes, oh, yes!" was a refrain on which he played subtle variations, for example). Jean Anderson's "sister-in-law"! was a fine piece of work, and with equal work succeeded where her Rosalind failed, simply because it suited her. Ann Penhallow, again, brought a real sympathy to her part as the "foostering" Mrs. Weldon, and was well supported by an alive and sincere Vera from Betty Chancellor, whose outburst in Act 2 was a real triumph. Nora O'Mahony's Miss Thornycroft deserves praise, too, for its well-observed comedy. This company is steadily improving and "rubbing down," so that Turgenev's delightful *A Month in the Country* and *The Uncrowned King*, a new play on Parnell by V. A. Pearn and Brinsley MacNamara, are awaited with some confidence, it being noted that much improvement hitherto has followed the introduction of fresh talent, providing a welcome relief from the hackneyed tricks and rigid playing of some of the company.

I have a real affection for George Sheils. The man who could be so kind-hearted in *Quin's Secret*, with its justice tempered with mercy, must be pleasant,

indeed, to know. He had a good support in P. J. Carolan, as Boss Dolman, whose performances reveal a steady good nature and humanity which no actor should possess and remain hardheaded. Yet Carolan achieves both, and this part, as usual with him, was all the more likable accordingly. The show was remarkably consistent all round, the company not being yet stale in it. Cusack's Harry Quin, the bookkeeper who "knows it all," was spoiled only by a lack of drive, a hesitancy either on cues or on reflexes, which has appeared lately. Three new actresses all showed genuine promise, especially in grasp of part; Sheila Timmons as Cassie being particularly pleasing in poise and sympathy; while Madge Heron showed little sense of timing but much assurance; I noted particularly that Sheila Maguire's Mrs. Henry, a very good rendering, failed to catch the audience completely, and it was due, I think, to undue slightness of detailed gesture and slight dragging on cues. A noticeable fact was that the audience were damped somewhat by the Northern accent, a shrewd departure from which saved much effect for both M. J. Dolan's alive and all too true scallywag of a Crilly, and Arthur Shield's peppery Briggs, and for Carolan himself. Hugh Hunt's producing was, as usual, unobtrusively faithful; while the setting, by Miss Moiseivitsch, was both original and effective in enhancing the action.

Lastly, *Waiting for Lefty*—we have waited long! This was an excellent production by Alec Digges, done with terrific and heartfelt enthusiasm to an audience which simply ate it up. The actresses unfortunately were very weak and were mere types. Typecasting was over indulged in, perhaps unavoidably, and in view of this, Cecil Brock's Phillips was a very good rendering of a part with which no one present had much sympathy—it revealed latent talent and finish which deserves more than walk-on parts. Having mentioned one, I should really mention all, but there was such a general level of competence that it is really unnecessary. Certainly the feeling is there, but this arises mainly from personal knowledge. I would suggest greater attention to voice-control and to movement and that thinking and acting in stock formulae be avoided. The staging was necessarily experimental and failed only in the improvised spot. I see no reason why full houselights could not be kept on throughout this play, a suitable background for the inner scenes being slid on when needed. How to sway the massmind of an audience is a lesson which this play has to teach to anyone interested.

Through sheer lack of time and space, I am forced to hold over notes on the last Gaelic shows of the season. I hope to review the season's work next month.

SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA



## FILMS

### SANCTITY AND SENTIMENTALITY

The appearance of the propagandist in the Cinema is to be viewed with grave suspicion, especially if a dramatic subject involving the use of human material is in question. The religious propagandist is not less of a menace, and if his beliefs are in agreement with ours we should be still more on our guard not to accept his presentation of those beliefs without question.

Here in Ireland, with a people accustomed to the ready acceptance of religious observance as a routine, little thought is given to the validity of belief and its relation to reality. In fact, reality itself is scarcely guessed at, and so what at first looks like a very calm and settled thing may on analysis prove nothing more than a very shifty traditional sentimentality. Belief is not something to pigeonhole for Sundays; it should form the basis for a complete acceptance of Life in all its manifestations rejecting nothing, not even Evil.

Now on the appearance of a film like the *Twenty-Six Martyrs of Japan*, the average Irish Catholic will go to the cinema with a prejudice in favour of the subject of the film, and quite rightly so. But, and here is where the danger lies, he will accept without question any detail of the treatment so long as it is coloured by association with the main theme. Any falseness of human presentation will be accepted as representing Truth, any ugliness of making as tribute to the Divine if it be but arrogantly well-meaning.

It seems to me to be quite necessary to say this in connection with the Japanese film shown at the Savoy during Holy Week, because I had looked forward to seeing it as being a Catholic film with some reputation, as being the first Japanese film shown here and so of interest because of what one had read of the Japanese Theatre, which would be naturally reflected in it.

In actual fact it turned out to be a mediocre piece of work in the tradition of Cecil de Mille, but lacking that individual's sense of showmanship. While camera work and acting were extremely good the construction was very weak, and the cutting just became a maudlin hankering after the pathetic. And if there is one thing the deadly enemy of real spirituality in Art it is that same element of discontinuity—a hanging on to one moment instead of a flowering of the spirit carrying it out into all moments of existence, into all phenomena of Life.

The stylized acting and make-up would seem to derive from the Theatre. From the point of view of Cinema this was simply marvellous material to handle if there had been any attempt to intelligently co-ordinate the efforts of scenarist, cameraman and cutter. In the fight scenes, for instance, the movement was reminiscent of pure ballet and contained moments of swift beauty. Unfortunately the director, T. Ikeda, did not make much use of the possibilities. The actors were quite capable of doing all that was necessary and displayed genuine feeling with a rare sense of finish. The cameraman achieved some lovely effects and was consistently good in his work. And every

facility seemed to be at the disposal of the director. The result was a definite disappointment. Bad film and ultimately bad propaganda.

As regards the plot of the film and its treatment, the continuity was bad and the stress throughout was laid on the brutal almost to the point of sadism. No attempt was made to develop the mental attitudes of the characters and everything was externalised—less than human. Things happened suddenly and one moment had no connection with the next.

The sanctimonious commentary cannot be blamed on the makers of the film as that represented Europe's contribution to the melange.

The film was presented in an atmosphere of departmentalised religion, which had on one member of the audience at least the effect of wanting to get out into the fresh air, a procedure to which he was not entitled being a critic.

The fact that this film is hailed as a *Catholic* film is going to place it in contrast with another similar type of film, the *Soviet* film, and it's just going to be unfortunate for the former. Whereas the Russians turn out beautiful films generally human in quality and so universally understandable, it is a fact that no great films have been projected from a Catholic background.

*Golgotha* by Julien Duvivier might be such a film, but it is not shown. *Green Pastures*, a profound and yet simple exposition of the Negro's child-like visualisation of God, is, I understand, banned. Jan Hin's film, *The Overturning*, based on the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, was probably considered highbrow, and Robert Alexandre's *Le Monastere* has likewise failed to reach our cinemas.

In the meantime, religion in the films has come to mean *Ben Hur*, *The King of Kings*, *Quo Vadis*, *The Sign of the Cross*, and *The Last Days of Pompeii*.

If Catholic propaganda is to be presented it must be good of its kind. The distinction between good film and goody-goody film will have to be clearly realised.

LIAM O'LAOGHAIRE

## FILM REVIEWS

THE GREAT ZIEGFELD: Robt. Z. Leonard.

A very long but quite entertaining film based on the life of the great American showman. With a rather naive glorification which ends in the acceptance of Ziegfeld as the spiritual brother of Beethoven, Michael Angelo, and Shakespeare, the picture, nevertheless, proceeds to interest us in a story of human adventure told with some humour and a sense of the subject. The meanderings of the theme never result in boredom and the impression of the man is quite consistently sustained by an excellent performance from William Powell. It is, indeed, to the strong human playing of the main actors that we owe the vital quality of the film. Luise Rainer as Anna Held gives a lovely performance as a fragile, temperamental creature; while Myrna Loy as Billie Burke, very satisfactorily supplies the contrast in a more practical type of woman. Frank Morgan is his usual efficient self as a foil to Powell, and Fannie Brice brings humour and heart throbs to her own playing of herself. The stage spectacle is lovely, both as spectacle and as photography. Amongst the long list of credits one noticed Karl Freund, who had worked on the older classics, "Vaudeville," "Faust," and "Tartuffe."

### AS YOU LIKE IT: Paul Czinner.

A very bad translation of Shakespeare's play to the screen. In fact, it also represents one of the poorest films seen in Dublin for some time. Again we have the old studio cliché of celebrity and expense without imagination. The whole open-air sense of freedom and pastoral frolics in the second part of the subject was completely lost in the musty reek of backstage atmosphere. The speaking of lines made prominent by the non-filmic treatment were redolent of the inhuman treatment that Shakespeare gets from this cult of verse speaking. And dolled up verse-mouthers about describes the players. If one were inclined to save anything from the wreckage there was a sincere performance from Leon Quatmaine as Jacques, while Bergner was at least warmly human at times, giving some of that *joie-de-vivre* on which the whole conception of the play should hang. The rustics were as good as they could be.

The failure of this film will be a disappointment to many. It will, to a certain extent, be used as justification for many onslaughts on the power of the film and will react unfavourably on any attempts to bring good films to Ireland, for the simple reason that it has got many of the external marks of good films. Nevertheless, it turned out to be a worthless insincere work in spite of Paul Czinner, Hal Rosson, Lazare Meerson, and William Walton, who, in their time, have created things of merit.

### FILM MAGAZINES

Seeing that very few outstanding films come to Dublin and that the current fan magazines ignore the existence of such films unless they come from the mass production factories of Hollywood or Pinewood, it may interest readers to know of the existence of a quite readable and informative monthly which deals with current developments in the Cinema from an intelligent and sane angle. Many of the contributors are people who are themselves involved in the making of films, and so are capable of presenting their ideas in a practical manner. Theorists, too, find room for the propagation of constructive ideas, and all new film productions and developments are chronicled and discussed. The title of this interesting monthly is *World Film News*, and it is published by the proprietors at 217-218 Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, London, E.C. 4.

Now that the fine weather is coming in amateur cinematographers will be bringing out their cameras and the reading of *Home Movies* might help them to be aware of and solve many problems of their hobby. That this magazine is readily obtainable in Ireland seems to suggest that the cult of the movie camera has reached these shores.

*Sight and Sound*, the quarterly published by the British Film Institute, should make a strong appeal to teachers and others interested in the possibilities of harnessing the Cinema in the interests of education. It contains the best guide to films in existence, and is published at the very modest sum of 6d. by the Institute, at 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

Another quarterly devoted to the serious film is *Film Art*, from the Studios, 5 Steynings Way, London, N.12, whose contributors in the past have included Arnheim, Eisenstein, Ruttmann and Cocteau."



## CORRESPONDENCE

I feel compelled to send my hearty congratulations on the growing excellence of your paper. The April number is a genuine portent. I am fairly intimate with the greater part of the best periodical literature in these islands and it is my deliberate judgment that IRELAND TO-DAY gives clear evidence of establishing itself as the equal of any of them in its own sphere. When one adds that it rings with loyalty to the new Ireland and to its soul : the Catholic Church, it is difficult to moderate one's praise.

I, for one, welcome its independence of the clergy. It is high time the Irish laity ceased being spoon-fed by us priests. If some of us find it a little difficult to adjust ourselves to this new state of affairs, we would beg you and your readers to remember that the dominating position of the clergy was created by the circumstances of our persecuted country. The lay leaders of Ireland were so often expelled or deprived of higher education. Even when they had the latter they were often driven to seek a livelihood out of the country. Since this was the case the clergy could hardly help acquiring a dominating influence as well as the habits that go with such a position.

I trust, therefore, that in asserting its just independence of the clergy and in exercising its right of criticism IRELAND TO-DAY will continue to do it without bitterness and without servility. Any priest worth his salt will be glad of the stimulus of such criticism. Most of us are average men who need prodding as much as any one else. But for my own part I ask at least as much consideration of our difficulties as layfolk rightly demand for themselves. We know from the story of Cisalpinism in England and from certain episodes in American Church history, that the laity can be blatantly tyrannical over the clergy when they acquire a little authority in Church affairs. Anyhow, if in the historic phrase of Robert Emmet, Ireland is to take her place among the nations, it will need the fullest co-operation of both clergy and laity. Yet our most gifted and kindly critic, Gilbert Chesterton, whom I had the privilege of knowing, was led to declare that the chief fault he noticed amongst us was our lack of Charity not towards foreigners but towards each other.

As a help towards healing this fault would you allow me to raise again the issue I have analysed briefly in the *Irish Press*. It is that we should unite in repudiating the negative attitude to the Faith which has been the main cause of any bullying there has been or is. Moreover, there can hardly be a more pitiable sight than to see pious people trying to steal the lawful outlets they need in spite of the Faith they love and which they interpret as teaching a Manichean horror of this world. The degree of truth in this statement will, of course, vary greatly with different individuals. Mr. Sean O'Faolain has given another aspect of the matter when he wrote recently in *The Tablet* (I quote from memory), that while we cherish the ideals of our faith we fear to exalt them because we are afraid that they will demand a higher standard of life than men are ordinarily prepared to live.

This is obviously true. But it would certainly be much less so if the crisis of our time was realised and if religion was taught as a fulfilment of our nature and not as its suppression. This becomes all the clearer when one remembers that the Irish genius is at its best in a time of emergency. Let me give a simple instance of this more positive method of teaching. I have often wondered why we are not accustomed from childhood to regard the great dogmas of faith as wonderful discoveries (from our point of view) bestowed on us by Almighty God and which are more exciting and satisfying than any discovery in the natural order. This attitude, too, would be better than giving concessions

to the unreal doctrinaire woolly optimism of nineteenth century liberalism which, personally, I find more hateful than Communism.

Let me conclude with a renewed expression of grateful praise to you and your staff for IRELAND TO-DAY. Knowing our native genius for destructive criticism, I am all the more ready to give vent to the enthusiasm that your magazine has genuinely aroused in me.

(REV.) GERALD FLANAGAN

St. Mary's Convent, Lowestoft.

### CUBISM AND SURREALISM

May one add a word to Mr. A. Power's most interesting exposition in your April issue? The Surrealists went wrong, in my view, because they drew the line between art and "reality" in the wrong place, and because they did not perceive the true relation between art and the "subconscious." It is not the element of representation in a painting that vitiates it aesthetically (surely those "cave scratchings of the primitive American man" aimed first and foremost at representation?), but the use of art to express and convey thoughts about the practical world of action. Aesthetic emotion is essentially contemplative, not active, and the artist's object is to produce it in the spectator *as an end in itself*. We do not praise Greek sculpture, or a Gothic cathedral, or Renaissance painting, because they inspire us to action or directly affect our everyday lives, but because the act of contemplating them gives us an intense and specific kind of pleasure.

And the concept of a "subconscious mind" is useful to the art critic chiefly because it helps to explain *why* certain forms and colours give us this peculiarly keen satisfaction. It seems to me a contradiction in terms to speak of an artist setting out to express the contents of his *sub-conscious* mind, which must, by definition, be unknown to him. You cannot, in any literal sense of the words, "lift art into the spiritual or subconscious," because a statue or painting is necessarily a concrete object, and Beauty is something primarily sensuous—an attribute, not of the artist's thought or conception, but of its tangible embodiment in the completed work.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the whole trouble with modern art is too much theorising—as has been pointed out by writers of such differing types as Walter Lippmann and the late D. H. Lawrence. It is not the business of the artist to *think* (in any deep or philosophic sense), but to *feel*, and to acquire the technique necessary for conveying his feelings. The great artist, though recognising and using every technical improvement in his craft, is not carried away by such things, and does not adhere rigidly to any "school" or set of principles in his methods of self-expression.

T. F. HARVEY JACOB

Waterford.

# BOOK SECTION

## THE IRISH SHELF

### THE REPUBLIC

THE IRISH REPUBLIC. By Dorothy Macardle. (London: *Gollancz*. 25s.). pp. 1072, 2 maps.

This history of the Irish Republic was badly needed, and our congratulations and thanks to Miss Macardle are proportionately great for her excellent exposition of the facts. One expects good writing from Miss Macardle, but more than good writing is required for the compilation of a history. That "more" has been given to the Irish people in this story of the Republic with a clarity, sincerity and moderation for which all future historians will have cause to be grateful. The documentation and indexing of the volume are excellent, and the biographical notes, if somewhat scrappy, are helpful and well-chosen.

The defects of Miss Macardle's great work are not many; its value to the rising generation in Ireland; to the greater Ireland beyond the seas; to the sincere student of history everywhere will be recognised by those who have lived through the fight and wish the truth to live.

Ireland's earlier struggles for freedom are indicated in the preliminary chapters, covering less than one hundred pages—few in so great a volume—but sufficient to expose the continuity of the English policy of hypocrisy and tyranny, as well as the persistence of Irish aspirations. Claiming that she writes from the view-point of an Irish Republican, Miss Macardle justly says: "Neutrality in such a struggle can exist only with ignorance or indifference." None but an implacable opponent of the Republic of Ireland would expect the story of that struggle to be written by any Irish man or woman from the standpoint of an indifferent onlooker. History is a human document; that it is possible to write with sincere conviction, without losing one's sense of justice or proportion, Miss Macardle has given proof. She claims, with truth, that the case of the opposition has not been ignored in her book. It were well if, in the books written against our country, the "case for the opposition" were as fully and as accurately documented.

The chief merit of this book is that it makes clear the truth that the Irish Republic, proclaimed in 1916, was freely and joyfully endorsed and established by the people of Ireland as soon as the opportunity was given them; that it was no bluff, no ambiguous declaration, as some of its betrayers would fain make the unthinking believe; that at the general election of 1918 the mandate for the Republic was clearly and definitely asked from and given by the Irish people. And when the break came, when men signed away what they were sworn to defend, it was an added unworthiness to throw the blame for their own defeatist attitude on the people whose heroic steadfastness had aroused the admiration of the world. Once the break had come the majority, in the way of all majorities, on most occasions, took the line of least resistance—or what seemed so—glad of a respite from the inhuman barbarity to which they had been subjected for so long. But the majority, as well as the faithful minority, knew in their hearts where their allegiance was alone due. This fact he who runs may read throughout the story of the Irish Republic. Writing of the election of 1918, which gave such an overwhelming victory to Sinn Féin, Miss Macardle says:

"The drafting of the election manifesto was a matter of deep deliberation.



It was finally decided to state with unmistakable clarity the nation's full demands. Sinn Fein stood now for sovereign independence and an Irish Republic; on that programme and on nothing less it asked for the people's votes."

And the speeches made during the election campaign were as definite as the manifesto.

Among those in gaol in December, 1918, was Eamon de Valera, who had, however, stated his attitude during the Clare election in 1917, and when he had been elected President of Sinn Fein in October, 1917. Adverting to the fact that de Valera was a stranger to Clare—"known to the electors for one cause only—his part in the Rising of Easter Week"—while his Home Rule opponent was well known in the district, and popular, Miss Macardle writes: "Deliberately he made his candidature a challenge and a test. His speeches left no room for any doubt as to the demand which he intended to present. It was the Republic. At the first meeting in Clare he quoted the Proclamation of the Republic which Pearse had read from the Post Office on Easter Monday, and said that was what he stood for. His election would be a declaration of allegiance to the cause for which his comrades died, a justification of their fight, and an endorsement of their demand." . . . "He spoke with the 'firm deliberate precision' of which Lloyd George afterwards complained." And in his speech at the Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein, in October, 1917, when he was unanimously elected President of that organisation, he "quoted the aim of Sinn Fein as set out in the new Constitution 'Securing the international recognition of Ireland as an independent Republic.'"

"That is what I stand for," he said. "What I stood for in East Clare and it is because I stand for that that I was elected here."

Later, during the truce, Eamon de Valera stated that he was not a "doctrinaire Republican." He could justify that statement, perhaps, by his support of the clause in the Sinn Fein Constitution. "Which reserved to the people the right, after the status of a Republic had been achieved, to choose their own form of government." But—our author quotes Mr. de Valera as saying: "There is no contemplation in it of having a Monarchy in which the Monarch would be of the House of Windsor." And again, "It is necessary to be united under the flag under which we are going to fight for our freedom—the flag of the Irish Republic. We have nailed that flag to the mast; we shall never lower it."

Miss Macardle has realised the necessity of stressing the unambiguous nature of the demand for the Republic which the people endorsed in 1918 and again in 1921. They endorsed that demand in the face of unparalleled tyranny and terrorism on the part of the British. They meant it; they believed that their leaders meant it also. If Mr. de Valera's pledges to the Republic have been particularly stressed in this review, it is in the interest of historical truth. In this respect Miss Macardle seems to have made a serious mistake. By putting Eamon de Valera's photograph in the forefront of the history of the Irish Republic, rather than Wolfe Tone's, for instance, thus seeming to make him the symbol of the Republic, she quite ignores his secession from that Republic in 1926; his acceptance of the Free State; his persecution of those Republicans who have kept their faith, whose Flag is still "nailed to the mast."

Miss Macardle quotes the address of Eamon de Valera to the "Soldiers of the Republic Legion of the Rearguard" in 1923, when the "Cease Fire" and "Dump Arms" order was issued by the Chief of Staff. Some of the "Soldiers of the Republic" to whom that exhortation was addressed, who obeyed that "Dump Arms" order, are enduring long terms of imprisonment to-day—for

obedience to that order. The Chief of Staff of the I.R.A. in 1923 is the gaoler of the Chief of Staff of the I.R.A. of to-day. It is the same cause, if the gaolers are different and the voices of 1917 and 1923 are, unhappily, changed. The young people reading *The Irish Republic*—with the pitiless logic which characterises the young—will ask why—if the professions of 1917, 1918, 1922, 1923, were right and sincere—should men be imprisoned in 1937 for faithful adherence to them. Such questioning will be all to the good. The questioners will learn that the Irish Republic depends on no individual. It is the living spirit of Ireland. Coercion under any form and under any leader will be powerless to break it. It was probably this touch of hero worship which prevented Miss Macardle from stressing the importance of the continuity of the Republic, and its maintenance by the “faithful surviving members of the Second Dail” which has not been dissolved. What a curious conception of “loyalty” the Treatyites developed after the Surrender! Griffith would not “let Lloyd George down”—the I.R.B. “would not let Mick Collins down”—the two signatories who really seemed to have signed reluctantly, Robert Barton and George Gavan Duffy, would not let their co-signatories down, or break their promise to Lloyd George, by voting against the Treaty. But they all let Ireland down, and not one of the “64” seemed to remember that to Ireland—and not to Lloyd George—or to wrong done under his influence—was their loyalty due, and their most sacred promises already given. What Miss Macardle writes of Griffith applies in a measure to them all:

“Arthur Griffith’s life-long loyalty to Ireland, his loyalty to his government, to his colleagues, to his mission and his Republican oath had given way before a promise made as part of a tactical manoeuvre to Lloyd George.” “Tactical manoeuvres” against the cutest, the most selfish, the most dishonest diplomats in the world! May the Youth of Ireland learn from this history that there is but one safe way of circumventing English wiles, that is by unflinching honesty and no compromise.

How the English gloried in their victory, and in the fratricidal strife they had caused in one part of Ireland while their Orange accomplices murdered our fellow citizens in the other part, with complete immunity. How can the shame of that betrayal of the Six Counties ever be forgiven? At any moment from March, 1922, when the Mac Mahon family were murdered, the Treatyites—they were not yet Free Staters—could have taken their stand, put the blame on Lloyd George for the murders in the North, and refused to go further with the “Treaty”—the fullest English interpretation of which the English Cabinet was daily exacting. Had they done so and thus united Ireland once more, how different the years that followed might have been, what shame and sorrow Ireland would have been saved! But the end is not yet. The English prided themselves on their victory—they had won an “Ally of passionate loyalties”; in future their peril would be our danger, their victory our joy!! We should be by their side in battle!! Well, let them wait and see.

In such a great book minor faults may be overlooked, yet it is a pity they should occur. Mistakes in the spelling of proper names, such a slip as—“the Delegation was to meet Lloyd George on October 11th, *just four months* after the commencement of the Truce,” should have been corrected in proof. But—Suffolk Street premises were opened early in 1922, in January, I think, and for Cumann na Poblacta—not for Sinn Fein, though they became Sinn Fein headquarters later; Monsignor Luzio’s mission in 1923 could hardly be described as a political mission, since he came to inquire into the matter of the formal complaint sent to Rome by the Government of the Republic, in December, 1922, concerning the partisan attitude of the Irish Hierarchy, and the spiritual

deprivations inflicted on Catholic Republicans. The re-organisation of Sinn Féin, too, did not take place as early as January, 1923. These are minor matters, it may be said, and in so monumental a work there is not much of the kind to criticise.

It is, indeed, a great work, greatly done. Ireland owes Miss Macardle much for her years of patient labour, and I am glad to have this opportunity of adding my meed of praise.

MÁIRE NÍ SHUIBHNE

### ARCH-MOCKER

AS I WAS GOING DOWN SACKVILLE STREET. By Senator Oliver St. J. Gogarty. (*Rich and Cowan*, 16s.). pp.330

Clothes make the man. Oliver St. John Gogarty as a little boy was taken to a party at the Vice Regal Lodge "dressed as an 'Irishman'—knee breeches, top hat and the legendary shillelagh"; he appears to have liked the regalia so much that he decided never to divest himself of it. He had, of course, to discard the begob and begorrah part of his equipment, and for this he has substituted a fine Latin blas of which he avails himself fully in his reminiscences.

These reminiscences reach back over some thirty years, and the author begins his tale in the present and works backwards in a series of disconnected vignettes to the days of his youthful conversational triumphs, for what the author remembers best is what "he sez sez he." The book will sell for its inverted commas, if for no other reason. Is it lest he might forget to record all the nasty things he said and heard about Republicans and about Mr. de Valera that the author adopts the unusual method of beginning where he should have ended? Another reason may be that this scheme enables him to evade the trouble of having a beginning, a middle and an end to his work. Conforming to these requirements means taking pains, and this is what the author has quite obviously failed to do.

It would be unreasonable to expect seriousness from the "arch mocker, the author of all the jokes that enable us to live in Dublin . . ." as Moore described him, and Dr. Gogarty's determination to be fearless, to love the lords and to hate De Valera can only be appraised in conjunction with his subconscious attachment to the knee breeches and shillelaghs of his boyhood. Here are some of the pleasantries he records:—

"Once Republicans get into office, it becomes the turn of the disgruntled to delve deeper for the pay dirt of the Republic through adits so narrow that they can be counted on to defy anyone drawing a salary as a Minister."

"The country's fallen into the hands of a bunch of gutties, whose knowledge of land is confined to the clay of the geranium in the tenements in which they were born."

"What we want in this country is a vomitorium, so that we can vomit out all the bloody fools who are ruining it. England has a puke-point, but we have not. That is why we cannot get rid of the sickening fools who try to boss us."

"De Valera and degeneration are synonymous."

"As an expert of splits, take it from me that there are some fellows who are depending for a livelihood on disunion. And one of them is De Valera."

"Thus it comes about that into the hands of one man in Ireland, and he not an Irishman, was placed the power to do Ireland more harm than any external 'tyrant' in the last hundred years did . . ."



"What was there to do but to curse the half-breed who had split our country."

"They are nothing but a lot of rogues and ruffians calling robbery Republicanism."

"As we turned the corner into Leeson Street I saw a little barefooted urchin on the steps of No. 97 deliberately fire a pistol in the air. . . . This was part of the nightly fusillade provided to keep Griffith awake and to add to the torture of his mind . . . ."

This stuff goes down in the pubs. A dog is allowed one bite, and in the pubs of Dublin many a man is known and liked for an oddity not estimable in itself. This pathological dislike for our present rulers is Dr. Gogarty's oddity, and the stuff quoted above when said with a laugh, gets a laugh, and, as often as not, a rejoinder in kind. Unfortunately it is not so easy to record laughs in print. And, anyway, like another type of humour this is not for export. There are sure to be plenty of Brethertons left. Let seekers after the "spicy" be forewarned; these are the spiciest passages in the book. There is one other passage more vicious. An unnamed public man is castigated for his halitosis, which is not very different from mocking a cripple for his infirmities. The author professes throughout an admiration for "well bred arrogance." Like the story he recounts of Queen Elizabeth: as an exponent of arrogance he's a great success.

Quite apart from the undue proportion of political vituperation which it contains, the book disappoints. There are too many lairds and lords and undistinguished bores to be reckoned with. The quips of the tap-room and of the dinner table do not necessarily crystallize well. One would have hoped for a more coherent, even if flippant, commentary on his times. The author has, perhaps, mistaken his time. He appears, judging by the space devoted to the revolutionary period, to desire to be associated with the revolution in Ireland. He parades a fine array of revolutionary tufts, most of whom he regards as toughs, collected, it would appear, at great trouble and expense; but he doesn't belong. One feels that it was somebody like Dr. Gogarty who provoked the famous query: "Where were you in '98?" It seems now that he spent a lot of his time as a hanger-on of the big shots, collecting mud to throw at them.

What a pity that so talented a man did not remember and retail more of the Dublin of which he was a product—the Dublin of Joyce and Moore. As it is the book does the writer little credit.

M. N. C.

THE CIVIL SURVEY, A.D. 1654-1656. Counties of Donegal, Londonderry and Tyrone. Prepared for publication, with introductory notes by Robert C. Simington. (*Stationery Office*, 21s.).

This is the third volume of the Civil Survey to be issued by the Irish Manuscript's Commission. The first two volumes were occupied by the County of Tipperary, and in this one we are transported to three counties of the "black North": Derry, Donegal and Tyrone. Mr. Simington has adhered to the same high standard which characterised the volumes of the Survey already published under his direction. A pleasantly-written, yet scholarly Introduction, gives an account of the immediate circumstances leading to the taking of the Civil Survey, of the manner of its taking, and of the amount of extant MSS. It appears that what has survived extends to portion of three provinces: Munster (Tipperary, Limerick, Waterford, and part of one barony in Kerry),

Leinster (Dublin, except New Castle and Upper Cross, Kildare, Meath, Wexford), Ulster (Donegal, Derry and Tyrone). As a source of seventeenth-century Irish history the Survey has no rivals. It deals in the minutest detail with every aspect of the Land Question—owners, boundaries, inhabitants, whether profitable or unprofitable, Crown lands, Church lands; it is, in fact, an encyclopædia of the history of the period in so far as it related to the ownership and tenancy of land, and Mr. Simington is deserving of the highest praise for the industry and care with which he is applying himself to the laborious task of preparing the Survey for publication. SÉAMUS PENDER

### THE STAGE IRISHMAN

THE STAGE IRISHMAN. By G. C. Duggan, M.A., C.B. (Dublin: *The Talbot Press*. 15s. 0d.). pp. 331.

The Stage Irishman is a most interesting subject. When I took it up nine years ago, it had only been treated in scattered articles, and never as a whole. I have to thank Mr. Duggan for an exceedingly generous reference to my work, and I am very glad to be able to praise his book. He has brought to bear a great deal of scholarship and historical knowledge; and though he neglects what is to my mind the most important part of the subject, he has certainly made a valuable contribution to the study of English drama between 1600 and 1800. He deals with Irish characters and Irish scenes in plays of this period.

Mr. Duggan's interests are rather those of the historical scholar and antiquarian than of the literary critic. Therefore, some of his swans are geese, in literary merit. Now that the idolatry with which nineteenth-century scholars looked on the age of Shakespeare has given place to a saner view, we see that most minor Elizabethan drama has very little merit, however interesting it may be from other points of view. Drama, indeed, always suffering from the desire to please the groundlings, and infected by the average actor's dislike of good literature, has never sustained a high level in England, in spite of its lofty peaks. I doubt if it is really a form in which the English tend to excel. After the Restoration, almost all the good English dramatists are Irishmen. Mr. Duggan gives admirable and accurate accounts of the plays and characters with which he deals and in this connection I have only two criticisms to make: one, that he has not noticed the fact that in *Captain Thomas Stukeley* (1600) there are alternative versions of the Irish scenes, one in prose and dialect, the other in verse and standard English. This was probably due to the increasing popularity of dialect on the stage. The other is that he does not mention the Irish "jig," a song and dance which was a popular turn on the Elizabethan stage. This was discovered and described by Dr. W. J. Lawrence before the war.

Mr. Duggan is at his best in treating the plays which deal with Irish history. He brings his knowledge and judgment to bear with great advantage on such plays as Charles Shadwell's *Rotherick O'Connor* (1715), Ashton's *Battle of Aughrim* (1722), and Colonel Michelburne's two plays of the siege of Derry (1705). These, and many others which he discusses are now inaccessible, and it is grand to have information about them readily available. For this aspect of his work he deserves great praise, and though his dealing with other types of Irish dramatic presentation is less excellent, it is all exceedingly competent and scholarly. He misses only one play to which he might have referred, so far as I know.

As he implicitly admits in his preface, however, the title is inaccurate. After all, by the stage Irishman we understand what Shaw called "that

traditional blend of Myles na Coppaleen, Robert Emmet, Daniel O'Connell, Thomas Moore and Brian Boru." This figure did not reach its full development until the third decade of the nineteenth century, when the majority of plays contained Irish characters of this type.

The absurd convention can hardly be said to begin till the eighteenth century. Up to that time the Irish comic character seems to be a descendant of the comic servant of the Greek and Roman stage, and is no more unnatural or extravagant than other such characters. In Sir Robert Howard's *The Committee* (1663), which Pepys and Evelyn both saw, Lacy gained great applause for his Teague, and the character became so popular that a sub-title, *The Faithful Irishman*, was added later. But the character is not conventional ; it was taken from life, is very sympathetically handled, and like most previous ones of the sort, is realistically derived from the Irish running footman. In eighteenth-century editions, the character is re-written, and bulls and other libellous absurdities introduced. I don't know why, but the bull is a very sudden development of the type, and the beginning of the unpleasant stage Irishman. No bull appears in an Irishman's mouth till 1713, in Charles Shadwell's *Humours of the Army*—the character is Major Outside, and we notice that the qualities of the servant are beginning to be exaggerated and transferred to the master. The nearest play earlier is Farquhar's *The Beaux's Stratagem* (1707), and there is nothing like a bull in it or in any earlier one. But from this time very few Irish characters indeed do *not* make bulls, and they get worse and worse.

From 1700 to the late nineteenth century was a period in English drama almost without merit. Between Farquhar and Shaw only Goldsmith and Sheridan wrote good plays. Sheridan's two stage Irishmen are part of the pandering which mars much of his work ; but I have often felt that Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, which was based on an adventure of his in Ireland, gives the truest picture of Irish people and life to be found in English drama before 1900, though the scene is said to be in England. The conventional figure began when English drama started to go down the hill, was at its worst—and how awful !—about the eighteen-sixties and seventies, and began to disappear when the drama began to be decent again. It was the worst of many symptoms of the disease with which drama was rotten, and to which it is always susceptible—see the Abbey Theatre to-day. There are two sorts of type-characters ; those conceived universally, which are, therefore, primarily intellectual, and achieve individuality through perfection ; and those conceived emotionally, therefore sentimentalized since the emotion is not attached to individual and personal things, as with the great romantic characters, but to conventional figures, situations, and attitudes, which disgust, not satisfy, the emotions of "men of sense, well acquainted with drama," to adapt Longinus slightly.

At different times two people—excluding Cumberland's Major O'Flaherty, who is villainously sentimental, though well-meant—tried to improve a condition which was the subject of continual complaint, not only from Irish, but from English critics. In the early nineteenth century Maria Edgeworth published three plays which were never acted. They were meant to give a reasonable picture of Irish peasantry ; but they have no dramatic or literary quality, and their attitude is patronising. In the forties Dion Boucicault started his long series of Irish melodramas. They are much the best things of their kind, but he had to make his living and please to live. They have almost every good stage quality, but very little human or literary worth ; and the innumerable imitations of them are unspeakable. The stage Irishman only died when drama



found its literary legs after two centuries. Before the Restoration there are less than a score of plays with Irish characters, thence to 1800 there are about ninety, but between 1800 and 1900 I have a record of more than two hundred ; and I should think that is about half of what there actually were, for most of these have some indication in the title, and there must be many without that.

The insult of the stage Irishman was not, I think, the result of malice towards Ireland. There were Irishmen among those who pandered to the worst in English and West British taste, and some of the worst plays were first produced in Ireland. It was the result of stupidity and dramatic illiteracy ; and these authors probably often thought they were making friendly, and even complimentary jokes. What is so pathetic as people who are thus unintentionally offensive?

J. O. BARTLEY

## POETRY AND DRAMA

THE TEN PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS, put into English by Shree Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats. (*Faber and Faber*. 7s. 6d.). pp. 159.

"As the web springs from the spider and is again withdrawn, as the plant springs from the soil, hairs from the body of man, so springs the world from the Everlasting."

"He looks at all things : knows all things. All things, their nourishment, their names, their forms, are from His will. All that He has willed is right."

Here are tenets as acceptable, as logical within their frame-work as anything in Christianity ; the theological difference between a religion which accepts as dogma the absorption of all in the All and one which preaches brotherly love and faith and good works need not deter us from a just appreciation of the beliefs which for so many centuries have moulded the mystic life of more millions than we can count. Here is the wisdom of experience and a knowledge of human nature which makes every aphorism and every proverb a reflection of that east to which we have turned for so much of our religion, our science and our culture. That it has been possible to English this mystic treasure-house with such grace and ease, in such periods of such liquid beauty, seems to me almost as great a wonder as that the poet who knows no Sanskrit and the mystic who is not a Native Speaker of English have succeeded in collaborating at all.

The Upanishads have been known in Dublin up to now only through the conversation and the "ceaseless vague preoccupation" of Æ—this is an exaggeration but is on the whole true. His very vagueness and his talk of the Infinite and the All merely prompted people to witticisms like the "mohomadaun" and the "yogi-bogi-box," but the translation of Shree Purohit Swami and Yeats has dispelled this cloudy luminosity and given us a body of belief which makes such witticisms merely silly. Even to those for whom the philosophy has not importance the passages taken as mere English or even as poetry must have a charm and a grace which will awaken their interest and their enthusiasm.

Compare the beginning of the eight Upanishad with Genesis:

"There was in the beginning one sole Self ; nothing breathed. He thought : 'Shall I create territories?'"

He created territories : that of the first water, that of light, that of earth, that of water. Heaven and beyond Heaven is that of the first water ; sky is that of light ; this mortal territory is that of earth ; under earth is that of water . . . .

Here, then, is Indian philosophy in language that all can understand, language as simple as that in which it was first composed.

CALAMITERROR. By George Barker. (*Faber and Faber*. 5s.). pp. 53.

I came to this book expecting the pleasure which I get from Surrealist documents—even when surrealism baffles or sneers at the reader there is yet an undefinable thrill in these charts to the subconscious. In Mr. Barker's work, I found bafflement and obscurity enough for ten surrealist works—and some pleasure. Though the work, read at random, seems completely mad that there is yet a kind of interior logic which makes it, internally at any rate, valid.

"What when bom upward breaking from heaven downward  
It is my babe in the bosom murmuring who."

's the theme song of his work.

But here is occasional beauty and thrill:

"It was her one note traversing Time  
Awoke me in the bower of the womb, I rose  
And saw her passing on the dark westward stream,  
The myriad of human struggling at her breast."

There is a consistent paranoic imagery of bird and tree, the wave approaching and the wave returning and interwoven through it all a richness of symbol and simile which make it a stimulating and sometimes exhilarating pilgrimage.

Mr. Barker has put all the terror and love and life of youth into his peculiar manifesto.

DONAGH MACDONAGH

ANABASIS. By St. Jean Perse, translated by T. S. Eliot. (*Faber and Faber*. 5s.).

The Anabase is an epic by allusion; the plot is abstracted from it and what would be situations in the story are conceived as *states of soul*. The method is related to the post-war nervousness not to take anything for granted and not to be fooled by anything, even by literary tricks; it provoked the challenge to writers from Eliot to Proust of making a structure for a masterpiece in the impossible conditions of not being able to pass from one state to another. Hence the "Drafts" and the approximations and Joyce's search for a continuity in "Night's hither and dithering waters." Seeing these conditions taken account of, with Poe's demands for "shortness" and "excitement" added, makes admirable the impression of unity and control given by the Anabase, more so than its contemporary attempts at an organised work. It is hard to understand why it should succeed; perhaps there is an action even if it is reduced to its most generalised appearances. The Poetic Art and all its tricks, which should never have been subjected anyhow to moral condemnation, seem called for now since their long absence.

The poem is divided into ten parts, a series of images of vast migrations in the Orient in the time of shifting populations. It has beautiful colours and sounds, every line is an experience lived through. St. Jean Perse is come to a point of the mind at which sensual and intellectual apprehensions invade him equally in original innocence.

Mr. Eliot's translation is a perfect re-enactment of the poem in English, like the passing of a cloak from one prophet to another. But the presenting of his favourite poets as "difficult" is getting rather a habit (see preface). St. Jean Perse is not difficult except on Mr. Eliot's own terms.

D. D.

## CRITICISM BECOMES O'CASEY

IN MANUS TUAS : a Play. Eric Wishart. (*The Burleigh Press*, Bristol. 6s.).  
COMMONSENSE ABOUT DRAMA. L. A. G. Strong. (*Nelson*. 2s. 6d.).  
pp. 131 + ix

THE FLYING WASP: essays. Sean O'Casey. (*Macmillan*. 6s.). pp. 200 + xiii.

The number of plays dealing with Mary, Queen of Scots, testifies to the wonderful possibilities of her colourful life. Would-be playwrights since before Swinburne have tackled the subject and generally failed, chiefly because her complete story involves so many characters of equal importance and was a steady unfolding to an end determined by her origins. Mr. Wishart has attempted to present this synoptic view, keeping to historical truth always, in a play with some 50 men and 15 women roles and a multitude of episodes, all rather aridly developed—nobody, even Mary herself, really being satisfyingly human—and so gives us a skeleton novel in dialogue—not a *play*. The number of scenes would render adequate staging difficult and a very interesting *motif* idea, coloured spotlights on *hands* only to give the keynote of each scene, is similarly difficult to guarantee and is often too superficial in effect, where not actually an anti-climax, to justify the labour required. A failure to see that speech, historically accurate (as the author assures us) may be dramatically wrong results in dialogue of deadness and lack of rhythm—thankless stuff for actors. All these faults can be traced to undue regard for the historical, and genuinely lovely scenes, notably Act 1, scene 4, and the last scene—the execution, coupled with feel for lighting and colour and a flair for experiment, lead me to think that the author can do much better.

Mr. L. A. G. Strong's little guide-book for tourists in Dramaland contains some good stuff, well padded with much wool about dreams, drama in life, etc., all quite true but rather irrelevant when not incoherent. The chief aim is to persuade the Philistine that taste won't hurt him and a resulting apologetic tone and repetition of the obvious leave the author with too little of real value to the student. Typically tantalising yet still valuable sections are—chapter 4, sec. 3 on tragedy as a tonic; chapter 5 on the scope of drama and freedom of speech; chapter 10 on the poetic play and verse-speaking methods (suggestive rather than informative) and chapter 16 on acting as a creative emanation from within rather than photographic reproduction. These go a long way to lessen my dissatisfaction with a very likeable author.

My first reaction on reading Mr. O'Casey was heartfelt regret that he should waste so much time and energy—and what energy!—in small town squabbles with critics whose abilities are reinforced by a backing against which he can pit only his own following of admirers. Not that any critic will ever endanger that. Some dramatic Lares and Penates are shown to have unsuspected clay feet, and if at times his irritation borders on rage, the complacency and absurd standards of his critics, for which he gives most amusing chapter and verse, justify him. If it has on other critics the effect it had on me—a thorough examination of conscience—the book will do all its author hopes. I am glad to say, by the way, that I passed very well considering the apparent dogmatism forced on me by lack of space. At least, I *can* say I have always given adequate reasons for all praise or blame I have “graciously conceded,” and I sincerely trust I have not given the impression I resent replies to my criticism—which is Mr. O'Casey's chief complaint against London critics. In case I have done so, without at all meaning it, I should like to say that I welcome statements of other points of view, the more the better. If I cannot print them, I'll reply personally. Having thanked Mr. O'Casey for the excuse he provided to get that



off my chest, I would also quote him as authority for not wearing bedsocks when (reluctantly) kicking pants nor yet for hiring brass bands when satisfied. Like George Jean Nathan, who is the father of us all, and who is Mr. O'Casey's ideal critic, I "believe in Krupp, not pop" when it comes to guns. Incidentally, several reviews included reveal Mr. O'Casey as a good critic himself who sometimes "pops." Regrettable but true.

Finally, I am glad to note that his leaning towards poetic drama, witness *The Silver Tassie* and *Within the Gates*, has now become a permanent bent, if the straws loosened from his hair by this wasp winged gale mean anything. It is good to see him up and doing with such fire and zest. The most amusing and stimulating book I have read for months.

SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA

## EDUCATIONAL

FRANCE : a Companion to French Studies. Edited by R. L. Graeme Ritchie, D.Litt., LL.D. (Methuen. 16s.). pp. 514 + x.

This book is intended to give, from an English point of view, a description of France to serve as a background to French reading and travel and it is most intelligently compiled. The editor, Professor Graeme Ritchie, of Birmingham University, aware that the average educated public reads history backwards, selects causes to dovetail into effects and likes swift generalisation, has presented his account with the emphasis laid on the 20th century and with special chapters on what has been most original in modern France and most influential in foreign countries, such as war, poetry and painting. Other important parts of the subject have been omitted so as to avoid vagueness or too violent compression and the total result is a very pleasant book giving the right impression of authority, ease and clarity. It must be said that scholars, when their erudition is noosed by what the public wants, show themselves far more efficient than the discursive literary amateur who is often employed by vulgarising firms for work of this sort.

The easy approach through the official French historians has been avoided; we are given an English slant. It is novel and, on the whole, strictly if somewhat painfully fair as, of course, any appreciation of one big power by another would be: there is a delicate balance between "France, mère des arts, des armes et des lois" and the contemporary "that sweet enemy, France." An astonishing exception is the editor's section on the 18th century, the Enlightenment, which is headed "The English Invasion." Certainly, Hume Richardson and Shaftesbury were most important in the development of the "Encyclopédistes," but, then, why not have headed the 16th century the Italian and the 19th the German Invasion? and, in any case, it is impossible to the central eye of the average public to see Voltaire and Diderot, who canalised history, as disciples. But Dr. Ritchie's approach to this century is otherwise a just corrective to the usual English conception of the French "universal" view, although Dr. Ritchie thinks of it as an English corrective. Professor Jessop's chapter, "The Philosophical Background" and Professor Boase's on French literature in the 20th century are exciting and masterly in their working back to principal ideas and their trenchant way of detaching and lighting up what is important in a period, once history itself has had to group events and blur them. The latter must be the best of its kind that has yet appeared in English, the controlled enthusiasm for the magnificent poetry that is common in such opposites as Claudel and Valéry being particularly infectious. The chapter on 19th century literature is, however, dull and old-fashioned.

Besides philosophy and poetry, there are competent accounts of the incidents of civilisation, of politics, administration, architecture, etc. Shades of Aristotle and Lenin ! And some contributors to *IRELAND TO-DAY* might be interested in Mr. Wilenski's history of French painting, which actually, and without hysteria, treats Cézanne as a dead master and Cubism as a long dead technical help to painters.

D. D.

## BIOGRAPHICAL

### THE DREYFUS AFFAIR

DREYFUS, HIS LIFE AND LETTERS. By Pierre Dreyfus. (*Hutchinson*. 18s. net). pp. 378.

The Affair, as the Dreyfus case used to be described, covering as it did the twelve years of Alfred Dreyfus' condemnation, imprisonment on Devil's Island and rehabilitation, was looked upon as a unique instance of the opposition of bureaucratic falsehood and treachery to martyrdom and patriotism. This book, the combined work of Dreyfus himself and his son, curiously retains the old world aroma of a period when the scapegoat had not yet become the common scarecrow of the concentration camp. Even though he belongs to a generation which dumbly accepts (in some European countries at any rate) the peremptory penalties of dictators, Pierre Dreyfus seems to have identified himself so completely with his father's suffering that he believes such injustice could never recur.

The battle between the Army General and Left wing politicians was joined so bitterly over this victim of prejudice that he became the excuse rather than the Cause. The honour of the Army was upheld by a porous plaster of forged documents, whilst the Socialists were more concerned about scoring a political victory over their natural enemies. They really did not feel called upon to defend a wealthy officer. Luckily, however, for Dreyfus he had friends who genuinely believed in his innocence—such tireless champions as his brother Mathieu, Bernard Lazare, Anatole France and Emile Zola—Zola, whom some Socialists were inclined to dismiss as a bourgeois writer, and who was imprisoned as a result of his burning appeal for justice in a newspaper article, entitled, *J'accuse*, which summed up the whole case and from which we quote the final passage :

" In making these accusations I am well aware that I make myself liable under Articles 30 and 31 of the Press Act of July, 1881, which punishes offences of defamation. And I voluntarily expose myself to this risk.

I know none of the people I accuse. I have never seen them. I bear them neither rancour nor hatred. They are no more to me than entities, spirits of social mischief. And the act I am performing here is but a revolutionary means to hasten the explosion of truth and justice.

I have but one passion—the Truth—in the name of humanity which has suffered so much, and has a right to happiness. My flaming protest is but the cry of my heart. Then let them dare to force me into the Assize Court and hold the enquiry in broad daylight ! I am waiting."

The drama of Dreyfus is well-known to the general public through Cedric Hardwicke's interpretation on the screen. Those who would go beyond the surface story will do well to read this book, which has all the excitement of a novel in addition to being fully documented and excellently translated.

A. J. LEVENTHAL

SWINNERTON : an Autobiography. By Frank Swinnerton. (*Hutchinson*, 10s. 6d.)

Frank Swinnerton was born ; grew ; went to school for a chapter or two ; suffered a little mild poverty ; got into Fleet Street at the age of fourteen ; and since then (reading, writing and talking) has lived liter-airily and cleverly, happily if somewhat smugly, ever after.

In other words, this book, except for a few careful candours, is not autobiography. It is another and a lighter survey, by Swinnerton, of Swinnerton's "Georgian literary scene" ; a sort of travelogue among his contemporaries by a man supremely endowed with the qualifications for cinematic and superficial exhibitionism.

This is not to say that the book is not good—that it is not value (as value in such things goes) for money. On the contrary, it is excellent fare of the lighter variety. Mr. Swinnerton is an old and competent and confident hand at the literary game. He both knows, and can do, his stuff ; and does it—and talks—in this book, extremely well.

Of Bennet and Belloc and Wells ; of Chesterton, Galsworthy and Shaw—of these and of the whole host of their minors and juniors Mr. Swinnerton speaks ; always interestingly and shrewdly, often amusingly, now and again sincerely, at times with just a sprinkling of the salt of malice, and never once boringly.

A lively and readable book, beautifully produced : but not great, and not—we insist—in any true sense of the word an autobiography.

PETER O'DONOVAN

MR. BULKELEY AND THE PIRATE : a Welsh diarist of the eighteenth century.

Edited by B. Dew Roberts. (*Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press.* Cr. 8vo, 194 pp., cloth, 7s. 6d. net.)

A very readable story has here been made out of the commonplace book of a small landowner resident in the north-west of Anglesey. The diary covers the years 1734–1760 and must have proved heavy reading indeed in the original. Miss Roberts, however, found a spark to kindle romance, and, incidentally, a fetching title for her book, in the fact that the famous or infamous Fortunatus Wright—the "brave corsair" of Toby Smollett's history—was the more or less faithful husband of the diarist's daughter Mary. Personally, I would have been more interested in Wm. Bulkeley, the honest, home-loving, hard drinking, rough riding Welsh farmer who, tho' he never mentions it in his diary, was a genuine lover of Welsh poetry and was actually the scribe of *Llyfr Gwyn Mechell* (Nat. Lib. of Wales, MS. 832, circa 1730), an important collection of Welsh ballads and poems by the bards of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. "But," says our editor, "either the labour of copying them out had exhausted his interest in the subject or else he had come to the conclusion that these ancient poets failed to conform to the standard of taste and style imposed by his own century, for only English or Latin verses find a place in his diary."

Irish readers will grieve that Mr. Bulkeley's two visits to Ireland, presumably recorded with fulness in the diary, are here so scantily summarised.

We feel sure that Miss Roberts, if she care to transcribe the record *in extenso*, will find a ready welcome in the columns of some Irish periodical. The explanation of the name of the Phoenix Park : "The Phoenix . . . a palace that was in the last century built by Henry Cromwell, the late Protector's son, on the ruins of which they have now marked out a place for the building of an Arsenal," makes us hope that there may be a deal of good Dublin gossip to be found in Mr. Bulkeley's diary.

COLM O LOCHLAINN



## FICTION

BORDERLINE. By Patrick Greer. (*Heinemann* 7s. 6d.).

OUT OF EVIL. By D. G. Waring. (*John Long*. 7s. 6d.).

ALL HANDS. By H. M. Tomlinson. (*Heinemann*. 7s. 6d.).

NINEPENNY FLUTE. By A. E. Coppard. (*Macmillan*. 7s. 6d.).

Mr. Greer, in a prefatory note, tells us that for the purposes of his story he has moved the Sperrin Mountains closer to the Free State Boundary. He is modestly apologetic about the feat, which might be condoned were it the only metamorphosis the district has suffered at his hands.

*Borderline*, written in the first person, recounts the adventures of a young Cambridge undergraduate on a visit to Ulster in the summer of last year. No sooner does he set foot on Irish soil than he is up to his neck in trouble; there are several attempts on his life by wild Irishmen, who materialise from the judiciously rearranged Sperrin Mountains. But not all whom the gods love are cut off in their prime, and these attempts are providentially frustrated to allow a delayed triumph for Love and the Law.

To an Irish reader *Borderline* is a completely irrelevant production—to anyone acquainted with life in Ulster it is ludicrous beyond comment. The characters are merely literary types, and the author's lack of perception is matched by a clumsiness of technique, which is all the more noticeable in an age when the dullest novels are fairly competently written.

*Out of Evil* has a similar theme—a visit to Ulster and its consequences. But here the similarity ends, for the author handles the story with skill, writes well, and has observed keenly and tolerantly. The characters—particularly Dennis Murrough, Delia Danescourt, and the vivacious celebrity, Molly McCreddin—are highly convincing, and the novel has those rare qualities of charity and humour, which are the haven of all good writing. The dialogue is consistently good, and the notation of Ulster speech gives a shock of delight by its accuracy and freshness.

Mr. Tomlinson's writings are among the brightest ornaments of modern English prose. Those who know his previous books—particularly *All Our Yesterdays* and *The Sea and the Jungle*—need not be told that *All Hands* is worth reading. It has all those qualities of style and outlook which distinguish Tomlinson's work.

They are qualities easier to enjoy than to describe. Tomlinson is not capable of being definitely catalogued under any of the customary labels. It would be inadequate to describe him either as a Realist or a Romanticist. Though his mastery of detailed description is particularly evident in his treatment of the storm episode in this novel, his general approach to reality is oblique. His vivid, clear prose gives a quality of spaciousness to his work, suggesting horizons no mere realist would apprehend.

*All Hands* is the epic of a tramp steamer, the *Hestia*, and of the crew that loved her despite her moods. They are an assorted lot—Billy Christmas, the Cockney Chinaman; Sparks, the Socialist wireless operator; Adams, who nursed the failing engines devotedly; and Captain Doughty, who had the responsibility of managing the temperamental *Hestia* and her equally temperamental crew. By his excellent characterisation Tomlinson wins our sympathy, and imposes his world upon us without straining either our patience or our credulity.

Mr. Coppard is another writer who adorns contemporary English prose by his handling of the short-story. His mastery of this difficult medium is complete, and this new volume of stories will be welcomed by all who are interested in the development of the genre.

Coppard has all the necessary qualities—humour, imagination, perception and technical virtuosity—and there is no story in this volume that does not reveal supreme competence and artistry. The short-story is a genre which has few first-rate exponents to-day. Coppard and Frank O'Connor are definitely among them.

NIALL SHERIDAN

### CHESTERTON'S LAST BOOK

THE PARADOXES OF MR. POND. By G. K. Chesterton. (*Cassell*, 7s. 6d.).

The first and last thing—the best and the worst—to be said about Chesterton is that he “spoke in paradoxes.” His mind, inspirational rather than logical in its working, quite literally leaped to conclusions; and he expressed himself accordingly, stating his case in epigram first—taking that short-cut to the truth which is paradox—and going round afterwards by the longer and more leisurely way of elucidation.

Such was Chesterton's invariable method. In paradox he launched the conclusion of his argument; in paradox, before telling his story, pointed its cryptic moral. With what force and effectiveness—with what wisdom and humour and vast relishable relish—he did so, his works proclaim. But there were dangers inherent in the method, against which he was not and could not be proof. For it is of the very essence of paradox that it shall be beyond question immediate, brilliant and spontaneous: and not even the genius of G.K.C. could command at all times such unfailing inspiration.

He did not command it in the work (his last, and posthumously published) under review. It is with regret we say it—and the Chesterton who wrote them may well have been a sick and tired man—but the “paradoxes of Mr. Pond” are poor and ponderous paradoxes indeed; the stories that are their elaboration, with the single exception of the one called “The Unmentionable Man,” “tours de force” of the most obviously forced and unwilling kind. “They go so fast that they get no farther”; “in Nature you must go very low to find things that go so high”—these and such like muddy obscurities were not paradoxes, and helped neither Mr. Pond nor G.K.C. himself to a story worth the telling. And Chesterton was aware of it; for there is abundant internal evidence that he had only the most pathetically weak sort of faith in his own creation or creature.

A disappointing book to have as Chesterton's last: but we must not blame Chesterton—we have his rich and innumerable others, to which we can turn again, and for which we can be eternally grateful.

PETER O'DONOVAN

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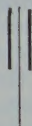
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## THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT. (16 MAR.—15 APRIL)

St. Patrick's Day celebrations; army parades; President of Executive Council broadcasts to America and Australia. Many Easter Week commemorations; Mr. de Valera laid wreath on Arbour Hill graves; I.R.A. meetings prohibited and clashes with police at Newport, Co. Mayo, Ballybay and Belfast. English hierarchy join in petition to Rome for canonisation of Bl. Oliver Plunket. New £120,000 church opened in Athlone. Muintir-na-Tíre week-end meeting at Roscrea questioned spread of industrialism and the drift to the cities. Fr. Hayes in Cork University extension lecture said rural schools should have rural bias. Tribute to work of Local Government Department paid by all parties in Dail; Minister said there was ten years extensive building work ahead, that incompetent engineers should be dismissed and that hospitals that could not be maintained should not be built. Saorstat returns for February showed 102,000 men, women and children in receipt of home assistance, 3.4 per cent. of the population, less than year ago. Deputy Flinn stated in Dail that to give continuous work to all unemployed would cost £15,000,000 a year; he defended rotation system on relief works, on which as many as 45,000 were employed at one time. Industrial Development Association called for training and employment of Irish technicians. Bureau for emigrants in London suggested. Distributive workers at conference in Cork decided to support Irish manufacture "if made under trade union conditions," and called for abolition of travelling shops and regulation of shop employment. Teachers' Congress at Cork demanded security of tenure and abolition of "averages." 16,000 men in Dublin building trades struck for improved wages and conditions. Strike at Arigna coal mines. Unofficial one-day strike at Glasnevin cemetery obliged mourners to fill in graves. Strike in Woolworth's Belfast stores. Gaelic League Convention in Dublin urged ban on attendance of children at ordinary cinema programmes and law compelling both home and imported newspapers to have page in Irish. 400 Delegates attended Fine Gael Ard-Fheis; Deputy Dillon's contention that tillage policy was failure disputed. First national convention of Old I.R.A. attended by 600 delegates, pledged allegiance to aim of all-Ireland Republic. Enniscorthy meeting of all parties planned '98 celebrations for next year.

Sean MacEntee, Minister for Finance, introduced his sixth Budget, giving relief in taxes on tea, sugar, butter and wheat. Dublin Corporation after hearing objections by slum and suburban residents rescinded proposal to build huts as temporary housing accommodation; City Manager reported that delay in housing was caused by shortage of materials and tradesmen. £11,000 vocational schools "for coming tradesmen, craftsmen and housewives" opened in Dungarvan by Minister for Education. Saorstat Director of Forestry in radio talk stated 109,000 acres had been acquired for afforestation; timber imports amounted to £1,500,000 a year. Act to regulate hoarding advertisements passed in North; Saorstat has already similar powers in Town Planning Act. Secretary for Education repeated in Parliament that Irish was foreign language in Northern Ireland. Membership of unified National Health Insurance Society now exceeds 500,000. High court awarded damages against detectives who fired on crowd at sale of seized cattle in Cork in 1934. Kildare farmer sentenced to four years by Military Tribunal following discovery of dump containing machine guns and large quantity of ammunition. Dublin police issue proposals for traffic regulation.

Oil distributing companies severely criticised proposals for new refinery under Government auspices and refer to possibility of their leaving country. Dutch officers arrived to purchase Irish horses. U.C.C. report on experiments stated that production of oils from home-grown plant appeared feasible. 1,500 ton cargo boat launched in Dublin, biggest ship built in Saorstat since 1924. British Government placed order for £3,000,000 aircraft-carrier in Belfast. Dublin Tramways had improved year. Livestock prices tended to rise.

Greatly increased entries at feiseanna throughout country. Awarding cup to the Unknown Players at Feis Shligigh, Lennox Robinson said he had not seen a better performance even in Abbey. At Feis Maitiu the Progressive Players produced "The Insect Play" for first time in Ireland. "The Revolutionist" by Terence MacSweeney, revived by Dublin radio studio. Dr. Douglas Hyde opened festival at Galway of plays in Irish. First radio symphony concert in Dublin, conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Song and Piano recital at Gate by Hamlyn Benson, Frederick May and Arthur Duff. Dublin Operatic Society produced "Butterfly," "Mignon" and "Traviata." Heifetz and Tauber amongst artists at International Celebrity Concerts in Dublin. Army band began tour of provinces and received civic welcome in Clonmel; Col. Brase said there was not better band in England or Germany and paid tribute to people's love of good music. Film version of "The Plough and the Stars" banned by authorities in Belfast. Government reported loss on "Oidhche Sheanchais," Irish sound film. Water Colour Society held exhibition in Dublin. Exhibition of Hone pictures in Waddington's Gallery.

## THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT *(continued)*

Exhibition in Dun Laoghaire of pictures, opened by Mrs. Power. Famous artists and collectors promised support for new Limerick art gallery. Five students of Dublin school of art secured prizes in Cleveland poster competition. P. Stephenson lectured to Old Dublin Society on Watty Cox; Fr. Myles Ronan to Academy of Christian Art on Early Christian Sculpture; Hylda Boyd to London Gaelic League on the High Crosses of Ireland. Jan Vyslounzil to Dublin Rotary on Checko-Slovakia; Dr. A. Mahr in An Uaimh on local historical sites; and T. D. O Sionoid in Enniscorthy on Wexford Poetry. Broadcast from Hill of Tara by Prof. Macalister and D. J. Liam Price. R.D.S. held scientific and technical exhibition. Irish society formed in Bradford.

When questioned in Dail on participation in Imperial Conference President stated there would be consultation if useful results could be expected and no matter of vital principle involved. Dail passed vote for Spanish non-intervention control; opposition criticised President's absence but Minister for Industry and Commerce said there was "no more fanatical democrat in country." Several Irishmen appointed observation officials. Further Irish casualties on both sides in Spain. Meeting in Belfast addressed by Fr. Ramon Laborda, Basque priest. Dr. Woodlock lectured on Spain in Dublin. Welsh nationalists called on President and Dominion prime ministers to make representations for setting up of Welsh government. Great crowds visited German battleship at Dun Laoghaire and crew received by President and Minister for Defence. President, Cardinal MacRory and Dr. D'Arcy joined in parting tribute to Dr. Isaac Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Palestine. Margaret Cousins presented with address by citizens of Madanapalle for services to cause of Indian women.

Died: Robert Johnston, Belfast Fenian and father of Ethna Carbery; H. M. Pollock, Minister for Finance in Northern Parliament. Thomas Brady Browne, master of Clare Hounds, killed at point-to-point races. T. J. Hanna, former Secretary to John Redmond.

Tillage operations backward owing to bad weather. February wettest month on record at many stations. Extensive flooding in Cork and east coast. Ships in collision in Carlingford Lough, and Captain, wife, and four men drowned. Armed men rob "Clive of India" from Dundalk cinema. Mentioned in Wexford court that a labourer had bought the Beatty estate for ten shillings. Many jokes played on deputies at Leinster House on All Fools' Day.

DENIS BARRY

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